Liverpool Nautical Research Society

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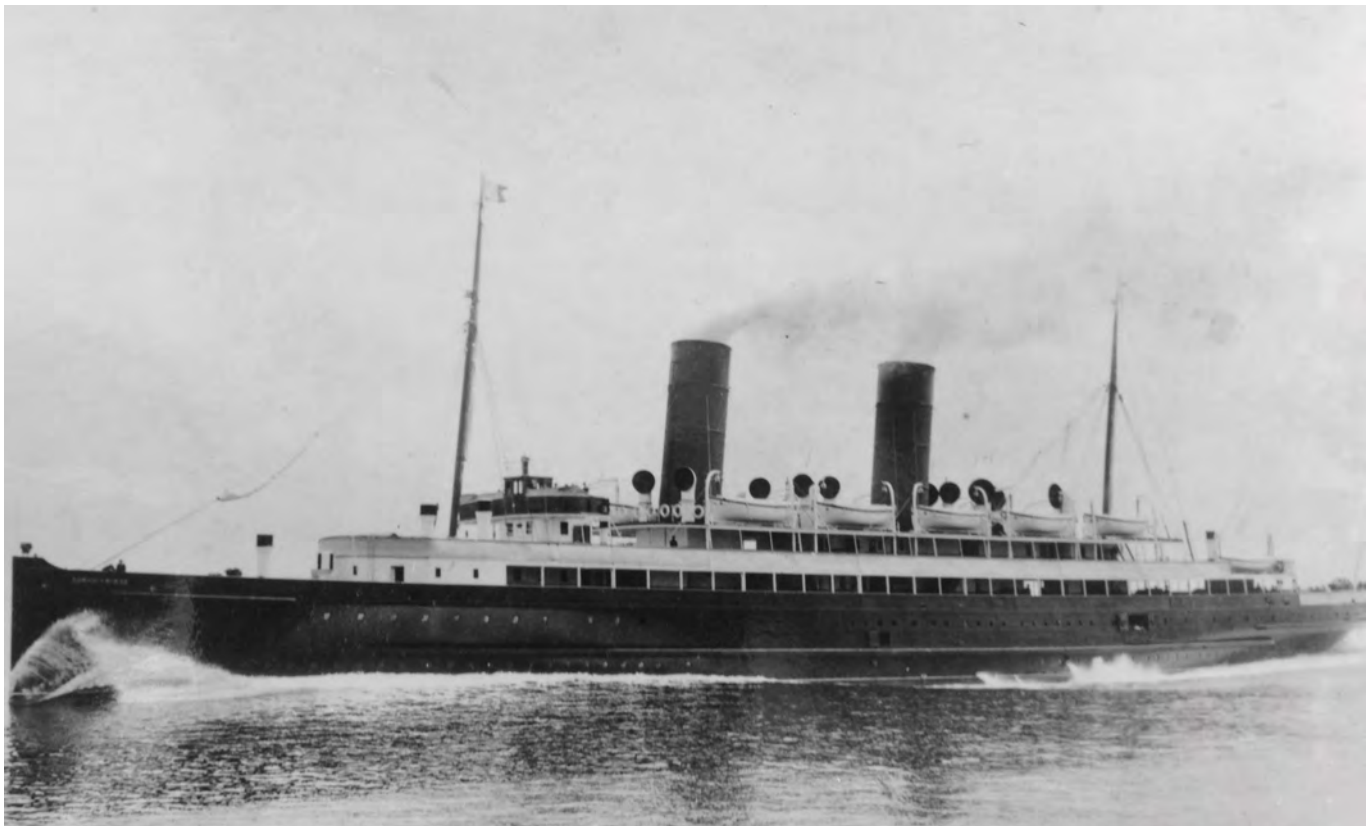
CONTENTS



The Steam Packet's **Ben-my-Chree** was launched by Vickers Sons & Maxim at Barrow on 23 March, 1908. 2,651 g.r.t. with a length of 390ft., beam 46ft and draft 18ft 6in she carried 2,700 passengers. Powered by Parson's single-reduction turbines her triple propellors gave a service speed of 24.5 knots

RMS **Franconia** was launched 23 July, 1910 by Swan, Hunter & Wigham Richardson of Tyneside. Of 18,150 g.r.t. with a length of 625ft., beam of 71ft. she carried 2,850 passengers. Powered by quadruple expansion engines and two propellors she operated at a service speed of 17 knots

Liverpool Nautical Research Society

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‘Hold The Front Page’

A Tribute to the Late William J Pape II

by Chairman John Stokoe

‘Hold The Front Page’ is a phrase that most if not all of our readers will be familiar with in relation to breaking news. One wonders how often it might have been applied in the offices of the Waterbury Republican-American during the many years that this daily newspaper has been published and edited by members of the Pape family.

William J Pape, (The First, I should quickly add) was born in Liverpool, the son of his adventurous father Captain Robert Pape who sadly died of Asiatic Fever aboard the barque **Maitland** in Yokohama. The surviving family took the decision to leave Liverpool in favour of a permanent new life in America. William was so gifted with an exceptional writing ability being demonstrated as a fledging reporter that his career rapidly progressed and he became the youngest Editor in New Jersey. In 1901 he took advantage of the opportunity to purchase the Republican-American which has remained a well respected newspaper with the family ever since.

William’s son, in other words William J Pape II, graduated from Harvard School of Business Administration in 1959 and soon joined his family in the running of this daily publication, rising to become Editor and Publisher until this present time. William first made contact with our Society around the turn of the millennium. To quote a phrase I have previously used (Bulletin – September 2013), it was at a time when one of our ‘bloodhound‘ researchers Gordon Bodey was delving into the story of the **Maitland** of which Captain Robert Pape had been the master. In pursuit of detail,

Gordon uncovered a tremendous amount of information which related to the Pape family. (Bulletin - December 2011) and as such revitalised this William's interest, not only in his family's Liverpool heritage, but also the fascinating work undertaken by our Society.

William accepted our invitation to become the Society's President in 2013. It was a privilege not only for our Society to attract such a renowned and respected newspaperman, but as William himself indicated, also for him to reinforce his link with Liverpool's maritime heritage. Since then 'Bill' and I have remained regular co-respondents during which time he has shown an unfailing and generous interest in supporting our work and activities, although unfortunately not able to cross the ocean and visit us in person. For this we have been sincerely grateful and honoured with his involvement and without doubt I shall certainly miss sharing LNRS news with him.

Our own front page has been held on this occasion as on 20th April we received the very sad news that following a short illness, and at the age of 87, Bill had passed away at his home in Woodbury, Connecticut. Our sincere condolences have been conveyed to his widow, Patricia Pape, and his loving family.

The barque **Maitland** in 1901, by William Howard Yorke

Captain Graeme Cubbin

A Personal Tribute by LNRS Chairman John Stokoe

In this day and age, there are few able to boast having spent their whole working life with just the one employer. In fact I would go as far as to say that this is nowadays nigh on impossible to achieve as we must all be willing to accept change, and probably many changes when it comes to our employment record This is a brief tribute recognising Graeme Cubbin as someone who was fortunate to dedicate his whole sea-going career, all 46 years in fact, to unbroken service under a single house flag. This house flag belonged to the Charente Steamship Company otherwise perhaps better known as Thos. and Jas. Harrison and for many of us regarded as that Liverpool company with the 'two of fat and one of lean' funnel.

There are undoubtedly many stories which could be incorporated with this tribute. The one that must stand out and with which Graeme Cubbin is most associated is as follows. Against his parents' wishes, and with obvious disregard for the dangers that were being faced by all seafarers during that difficult period during the early months of WW2, Graeme was steadfastly determined to go to sea. He signed up with Harrisons as a Cadet in February 1940 and joined his first ship s.s. **Scientist** bound for South and East Africa, steaming independent of any convoy throughout the South Atlantic. Cargo was discharged at a handful of main sea-ports and the ship was then loaded for the return voyage to the UK, once again steaming independently but with every intention of linking up with a convoy from Freetown northwards. Unfortunately **Scientist** would not get that far as on 3rd May, barely three months into his cadetship, the vessel was intercepted by the heavily disguised German raider **Atlantis**. There would be no escape for **Scientist** and therefore, with the sound of gunfire emanating from **Atlantis**, the Captain gave the order to abandon ship and immediately her crew took to the lifeboats so as to minimise injury or worse. Whilst **Scientist** was being sunk by gunfire, her crew were taken aboard **Atlantis** where they were to spend the next ten months as prisoners of war. The numerous crews of **Atlantis**'s victims were taken off and landed at Mogadishu. Initially under guard by Italians they were soon liberated by allied forces.

Some two months later Graeme Cubbin was back in the UK and in Liverpool at his home, a tremendous surprise for his family. They had never completely lost hope despite the fact that notice had been received from the Admiralty in July 1940 that **Scientist** had been lost with all hands. This had certainly been an epic experience for Graeme. Undaunted by this, within a matter of weeks he was signing on his next voyage with the Harrison Line. He experienced many other noteworthy incidents throughout his lengthy career, becoming Master in 1964 and then Marine Superintendent in 1973. Although retiring in 1986, Graeme remained

active, becoming their historian and looking after the company archives in a small museum at the Liverpool main office.

Graeme Cubbin's achievements do not end there. He set about writing a company history recounting the story of Harrisons its ships and crews, in a richly detailed and hugely fascinating account of all 333 owned and managed ships. It was a labour of love that took over 10 years to compile. Equally as important it is a lasting and fitting tribute to what has been described as a century and a half of endeavour.

Besides being an active contributor to the Society's Bulletin sharing numerous accounts of his sea-going experiences, let us not forget that for many years Graeme was a Vice President of our Society, an association of which we are justly proud. He continued attending our monthly meetings right through much of 2018 and well into his 90s until poor health prevented him from continuing. I was fortunate to see Graeme just a matter of days before he passed away, at the grand age of 95 years, after having been well looked after at the Care Home, Mariner's Park. Wallasey. He had the benefit of a room that offered a delightful view of the River Mersey, but sadly it could only be left to his by then frail imagination to be able to visualise a Harrison vessel steaming by. I held the highest respect for Graeme and perhaps the greatest tribute that I can add in conclusion would have been the pleasure for me to have sailed on a voyage with him as the Ship's Master.

I am indebted to the publishers of Harrisons of Liverpool and also John Richardson for his Victims of Atlantis publication which have enabled me to prepare this tribute.

Schedule of Talks 2019 - 2020

Ian Duckett, Talks Secretary

2019

Sept 19th : ‘River Mersey Defences 1750 - 1950’

By Tony Barratt

‘A review of the River Mersey Defences, including those proposals that never came to pass! Most of the ‘battles’ involved were between the City and the War Department although the Wirral did once fire on Lancashire'

Oct 17th: ‘Why does the Royal Navy remember Nelson above all others?’

By Captain Hugh Daglish RN Rtd.

‘With Trafalgar Day the 21st October just a few days away Captain Daglish looks at the lasting impact of Nelson on the Royal Navy ’

Nov 21st : ‘Liverpool’s Under-Studied and Little Known Whaling Trade since 1750’

By Dr Simon Hill

‘This talk covers the origins of Liverpool’s Whaling trade, life on board a Liverpool Whaler, how the trade affected the port’s built environment, the trade in the post-1945 world as well as the global politics of Whaling’

Dec 19th: ‘A laugh on the Ocean Wave!’

By Brian Price ‘Brian, a long serving former Cruise Director on the **Queen Mary 2** will give a light hearted talk about running away to sea and ending up working on one of the world’s most famous liners’

2020

Jan 16th: ‘How the Sea Shanty became a symbol of ‘Britishness’l’

By Graeme Milne

’Sea Shanties have become an important part of maritime heritage. This talk traces their origins, the way they were preserved and collected, often being given new meanings by succeeding generations’

Feb 20th: ‘MV **Cap San Diego** – The White Swan of the South Atlantic’
By Tony Melling
‘This talk will recount the career of the MV **Cap San Diego** as a cargo-passenger liner between Europe and the South Atlantic from 1962 to 1986. The essential focus will be on the ship’s design and facilities but her current status as a fully functioning museum ship in the port of Hamburg will also be explored.

Mar 19th ‘Dancy’s Leap – The Story of the **Flying Enterprise**’s sinking in January 1952 ’
By Keith Hick
‘En- route from Germany to the USA, the **Flying Enterprise**’s dramatic plight and the bravery of her Master Capt. Carlsen and the 1st Mate of the rescue tug **Turmoil**, Kenneth Dancy, gripped the British nation which was unaware of the top secret cargo the vessel was carrying’

Apl 16th ‘Gibbs Bright and the SS **Great Britain** in Liverpool’
By Richard Martin
‘The SS **Great Britain** was conceived and born in Bristol but lived her life operating out of Liverpool for thirty years. This talk is about her owner’s Liverpool business and their liner service to Australia ’

May 21st ‘Inshore Minesweepers of the 1950s’
By David White
‘After WW2, with an increasing threat from the USSR, the UK implemented a major increase in the RN’s ability to deal with the threat of mine-laying in home waters. The inshore threat was countered by building 243 Inshore Sweepers that proved so useful that their roles developed well beyond that envisaged with some serving the nation for over four decades’

Captain Michael Jones - Vice President

Words of Welcome from LNRS Chairman John Stokoe

In recent times and in fact within this particular ‘Bulletin’ Members will have noted the passing of our President William Pape, and, in addition, the second of our Vice Presidents, all within a six months span. Not only were Harry Hignett and Graeme Cubbin fellow mariners during their various times at sea, they were also good friends whose loss is still felt by many Members, and perhaps more so those in and around Merseyside able to attend our monthly meetings. I am quite certain that all of our late friends would most certainly be wanting the Society to continue moving forward despite these sad circumstances.

As such, Council has given immediate and very careful consideration to what should now follow and in the first instance a decision was taken to make just the one Vice President appointment. It is perhaps ironic that once again Thos. and Jas. Harrison should continue to have a background part in this process. It is with much pleasure and also a privilege that gladly we have been able to attract Captain Michael Jones to this role with immediate effect and our good wishes have accompanied his appointment.

During his early years Michael Jones had enjoyed regular walks with his father around the Birkenhead docks complex and it was this initial interest in ships that nurtured the way for a life-long career in the Merchant Navy. Following a short spell as office boy in the dock office of a local shipping company, in 1948 he was fortunate to secure appointment as a Deck Cadet with Thos, and Jas. Harrison. Fellow seafarers will always clearly recollect their first ship and Michael Jones is no exception joining the s.s. **Linguist** for her own maiden voyage.

Through the benefit of a very fair company promotion policy, and of course following 22 years experience as a Deck Officer, Michael’s patience paid off when in 1970 he was given his first command of the cargo liner s.s. **Wayfarer**. This promotion coincided with the beginning of a period of significant change within the British merchant fleet as a whole. Most shipping companies were directly affected, Harrisons included, resulting in many

having to abandon their regular traditional trading routes and voyages. These changes were attracting the introduction of large bulk carriers to be shortly followed by early container vessels. Captain Jones was to spend time in Japan overseeing the new build programme before taking command during the maiden voyages of two large bulk carriers on a worldwide trading basis and bringing challenges which quickly became a new and enjoyable way of following his career. In 1974 in recognition of these new experiences Captain Jones was invited to join the company's Marine Department as Assistant Superintendent. It was the dawn of the container age and this role attracted worldwide travel in relation to cargo handling supervision. A further internal move to take charge of the Fleet Personnel department sadly coincided with the suspension of recruitment and having to organise the redundancy of most of the sea staff. These were extremely difficult times but Harrisons still had some ships in its fleet and in 1986 he was appointed Marine Superintendent.

MV **Wayfarer** 8150 tons, Built 1951 by Wm Doxford & Sons, Sunderland. Sold 1971

During retirement Michael Jones represented his company within the 'Liverpool Steamship Owners Association' and until earlier this year he has been a Trustee of the 'Mersey Mission to Seafarers' which has now become 'Liverpool Seafarers Centre' He also maintains some involvement with 'The North West Ports Welfare Committee'

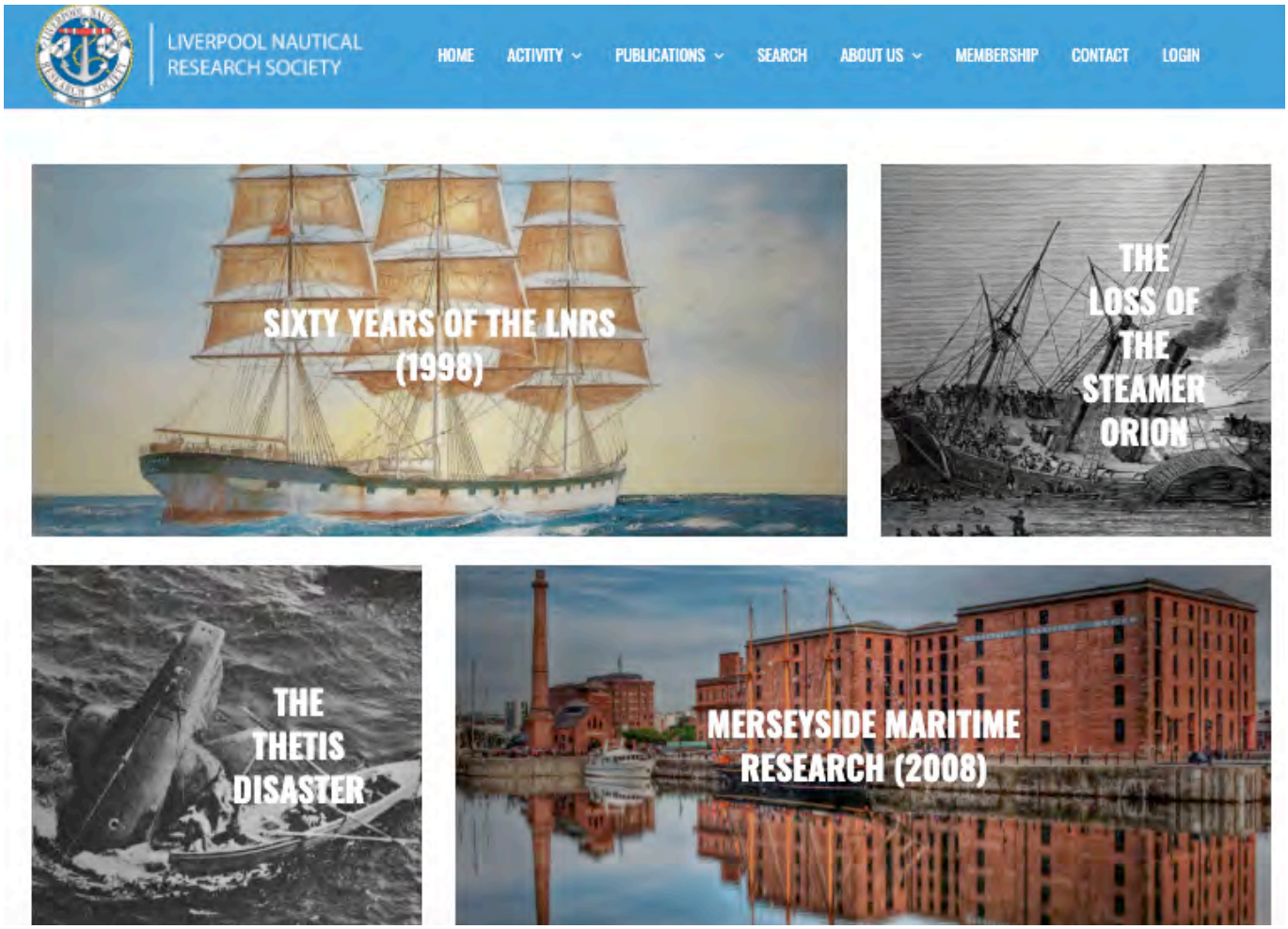
Michael's association with our Society stretches back as far as 1993 and during his membership he has served as Vice Chairman under his friend Captain Graeme Cubbin before succeeding him as Chairman. Nowadays he also remains active both with The World Ship Society and Master Mariners Club. We welcome Captain Michael Jones in his new role as Vice President with the society.

The New Society Website

by webmaster and L.N.R.S. member Ted Scaplehorn

Nowadays we take for granted that almost any information we want will be easily and freely accessible through the technological marvel that is the Internet. The Liverpool Nautical Research Society has long been attuned to the opportunities of the world-wide web and established its first website as far back as 2001 under the Chairmanship of our current Vice-President, Captain Mike Jones.

Last autumn, the Council decided that a refresh of the website was needed with the dual aims of improving the service to members and promoting the Society to the wider world. The initial focus was on the Society's archives which are deposited in the Maritime Archives and Library of the Merseyside Maritime



Home page of the new web site

Museum, where they are not readily accessible except to locally-based members, with the intention of making them available both to the membership and the public at large. We invited Liverpool-based web hosting company Sparkz Network to come up with a design that would retain the overall character of the previous

website while providing a range of new capabilities, including a searchable archive and a private area for members, of which more later.

While the website was being re-designed, we set about converting the printed volumes of archives into a digital format that could be viewed on-screen. There were essentially two options for doing this: the first – and slightly easier - would have involved a specialised archiving company with some very sophisticated equipment and many thousands of pounds; the second required merely a tripod, a digital camera with a foot-operated shutter fashioned, Heath Robinson-style, from a street musician's pedal, some completely free software and someone daft enough to photograph all 7000 pages. For technical reasons we chose the second method and with exceptional support from the staff of the Maritime Archives and Library the task was completed in less than a month.

The new website went 'live' at the end of March. Although the new design looks quite different from before, most of the original elements are still available through the main menu though sometimes in slightly different places. The most obvious difference is that users can now access the archive material, either directly from the 'Archives' menu option, or indirectly through the 'Search' option. From the 'Archives' option you will be presented with a complete listing of the Society's publications from 1938 up to 2014 which are those publicly available in the Maritime Museum. Selecting from the list will open the chosen publication which can be read on-screen, printed or downloaded and saved for later.

Searching is useful if you are looking for information about a specific topic. Entering a word into the search box will bring up a list of documents in which that term has been found. You can then select one of those documents and repeat your search inside it to find what you are looking for. The instructions for this are clearly shown on the search page.

Searching is not always easy. You may get no results, either because the word you are looking for doesn't exist anywhere in the archive or, if it does exist, it hasn't been recognised by the search software. This can happen if the original document is difficult to read, for example because it is particularly feint, or the page is creased. More often, you will find that you get so many results that it becomes difficult to find the one you want. I extreme cases a word is so common that it's been excluded altogether. For example, the word 'Liverpool' appears in every single document, so has been excluded and will not actually return any results if you try to look for it. Fortunately, there is an alternative means of finding information, thanks to LNRS member Gordon Bodey, who began compiling a manual index to the archives some years ago and has kept it going up to the present. Up to now, Gordon's index has sat alongside the printed volumes in the Maritime Museum, but you can now access it directly from the website 'Search' page. Although the index doesn't link directly to individual documents, it can show

you which volume to select from the full listing and you can then search inside that document as described earlier.

The other important new feature is the members' area, which is accessed through the 'Login' menu option. Members should have received a letter containing detailed instructions with this edition of The Bulletin; if you have not, or if you need any help logging in, please get in touch with us – preferably by email at contactlnrs@gmail.com - and we will be glad to help.

You do not have to login to the members' area to use the website but doing so brings two major benefits. First; you will have access to the most recent editions of The Bulletin, from 2015 up to the present which you can search, print or save, as well as having them conveniently to hand on your laptop, tablet or mobile phone. Second; members who have logged in will be able to use the new 'Forum', which is a kind of electronic notice board where you can post comments, ask or answer questions and generally interact with other members. To start with, there is a single 'General Discussion' forum but it will be very easy to add others as they are needed. This is an exciting new feature which we hope members – particularly those who live some distance from Liverpool - will find useful.

Your new website represents an important gateway through which members can interact with the Society and with each other much more easily than before. It remains a work in progress, which we will continue to develop to meet members' needs. It is, above all, your website and we welcome your comments and suggestions for improvement. We hope you will enjoy using it:-

www.liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org

Tandberg Polar ex **Alfred Lamey**

by LNRS Member Bill Ogle

based on research submitted by Captain John Evans

When I penned the recent article about recovering Amundsen's **Maud** I was aware of her having being towed from Cambridge Bay in Canada's far north Nanavut Province via Greenland and the Faroes to her original home port near Oslo; and that the tow was by a vessel called **Tandberg Polar**. Fortunately LNRS member John Evans has kindly provided the full and fascinating history of this former Liverpool tug. Yes, she did begin life on the Mersey in 1967!

She was built by James Lamont & Company Ltd., Port Glasgow (Yard No. 406) for J. H. Lamey Ltd., Liverpool. Launched on 9.2.1967 and completed as the **Alfred Lamey** on 24.04.1967. Her basic details were:

O.N. 334212. 225 tons gross Length 106' 11" x beam 28' 1 and draft 11' 0". Main engine a 6-cylinder 4 S.C.S.A. (360 x 450mm) MWM TBRHS345SU type engine by Motorenwerke Mannheim AG. 1,700 bhp. 11 kts. 22 tons bollard pull.

In 1968 J. H. Lamey Ltd. were taken over by Alexandra Towing Company Ltd. and on 14.9.1970 she was renamed **Coburg**.

The **Alfred Lamey**, as built.

In October 1992 she was laid up with overdue surveys, and the following year sold to Peter Arnesen, Norway and renamed **Mor.** Under the Norwegian flag she was registered at Farsund, c/s LGJD, 210 GT, 63 NT.

The next year, 1994, she went to Poland for part re-construction and modification which included a raised forecastle, towing winch and installation of a bow-thruster (by Brunvoll of 450 hp. giving 5 tons of thrust). A new wheelhouse was built, to have been installed in Norway, but in the event was not fitted.

Sold again in 1997 to Gjensidige Bank Finans AS, Trondheim on behalf of J.K.B. Trans AS Norway she was renamed **Argus**.

In 1998 she was returned to Poland to have a Kort nozzle and controllable pitch propeller fitted. This gave her an increased total power of 25 tons bollard pull, and the new wheelhouse was eventually fitted.

As **Coburg** in her original role

Sold yet again in 2000 her new owners were Farsund Fortoyningselskap AS, Farsund and she was renamed **Khan**. Remaining under the Norwegian flag she was registered at Farsund, c/s LGJD, MMSI:257370500, 235 GT, 70 NT. In 2013 she was bought by Tandberg Eiendom A/S, at Oslo, and renamed **Tandberg Polar** with the same registration details.

As **Khan** after the second re-build in Gdansk

Tandberg Eiendom AS is a Norwegian property company with its roots in the town of Asker, comprising some 58,000 inhabitants and located fifteen miles south-west of the Norwegian capital, Oslo

The company was established in the late 1970s when Ingunn Tandberg started importing textiles from the East and the clothing chain Madam Blue was established. At its peak the chain consisted of 18 stores in the Eastern Norway area. The company also operated as a wholesaler under the parent company Blue Dress and even designed the majority of the clothing collection. Profits from Madam Blue / Blue Dress were invested continuously, from the middle of the 1980s, in town houses and business premises in Oslo and eventually in Asker. This is how Tandberg Eiendom grew to the successful company it is today, and has a real estate portfolio of around 100,000 sq.m.

Asker is important to our story because In 1916 the Arctic expedition ship **Maud** was built in nearby Vollen and launched into Oslofjord. The ship was designed and built especially for Roald Amundsen and sailed through the Northeast Passage between 1918 and 1924. Sold to the Hudson's Bay Company as the supply vessel **Baymaud** she sank at Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, Canada in 1930. In 1990, the ship was sold by the Hudson's Bay Company to Asker town with the expectation that she would be returned there; however the export permit expired due to the 230 million kroner ($26,200,000) cost to repair and move the ship. In 2011 a new project was commenced to salvage **Maud** and transport her to a new museum to be built at Vollen. This latter project was led by the Tandberg family, hence their purchase of the heavily modified former Liverpool tug **Alfred Lamey**.

In 2011 when Tandberg Eiendom (managed by the brothers Franz and Gudbrand Tandberg) bought the resort village and marina at Vollen Handelssted they found this was the site where the shipyard which had built the **Maud** had been located. This re-awakened the thinking of returning her to Vollen, and of the ultimate goal; a museum "Maudhouse" in Vollen. A museum to showcase **Maud**, but also tell the story of Vollen and boat builder Jensen, chosen to construct Amundsen's only purpose-built ship. Unlike his other ships **Gjøa** and **Fram**, **Maud** has never received the honour she deserves. Similarly, the boat building traditions of Vollen are an untold story.

In June, 2011, Tandberg Eiendom became owners of the **Maud** and of the project of returning her to Vollen and, after two years of intense work by their team in Canada, the project required a tug suitable for the arduous recovery and long tow home; hence the purchase of the **Khan** and her renaming to **Tandberg Polar**.

In this short article it is not possible to record in detail the story of raising **Maud** to the surface, after 86 long years under the ice. However, she was refloated in August 2016 and positioned on a submersible barge; by the time the mud and debris was cleared from the hull, ice had returned and work was halted for that year. By August 2017, with the **Tandberg Polar** refurbished after three arduous years of enforced lay up in the Arctic, the long tow home began. Leaving in late August , she sailed out of the North West passage and across Baffin Bay. Tug and tow safely arriving in Aasiaat on 16th September, to winter on West Greenland (a distance of approximately 1,500 nm). In June 2018 the long haul continued, first to a refuelling stop at Anir on the Faroe Islands (approximately 2,000 nm) from where they departed on 7th August, destination Oslo (approximately 900 nm). **Maud** finally returned to Asker on 18th August, much having happened both to and around her since her launch in 1916. The same could be said for the one-time **Alfred Lamey**!

Maud's arrival at Vollen on 18 August, 2018 with **Tandberg Polar** alongside.

Ship's surgical instrument box of the 1950s

by Dakin Bros.by Dr Robert Bruce-Chwatt, former surgeon, P&O.S.N.Co

This surgical instrument box was saved after being discarded when a P&O ship, **Sun Princess**, was sold in 1988, the new American owners having no further interest in it for their medical department. **Sun Princess**, was ordered in 1970 by Klosters Rederi SA for Norwegian Cruise Line under the name **Seaward**, but she was never acquired by them. The name thus failed and she was finished under the aegis of P&O Cruises, who named her **Spirit of London**, the first diesel powered liner of the P&O Fleet.

Laid down in 1970, the ship was launched in May 1972 from the Italian shipyards at the Cantiere navale di Riva Trigoso and would go on to have a very colourful and varied life.

She was transferred to Princess Cruises in 1974 and renamed **Sun Princess** and I sailed on her in 1985, joining in San Juan, Puerto Rico just after Christmas of that year; my first single surgeon cruise ship after my trip to Southern latitudes with **Uganda**. I sailed several times with the “Sun” until she was sold on the 24th of February 1989, after a ship lift dry dock and a starboard side drive shaft inspection at Los Angeles, to Premier Cruises. “The Sun”, as she was usually known, was renamed **Starship Majestic**, re-registered in Nassau and therefore re-flagged at the Bahamas. I do remember the puzzled Princess shore agent telling me of the trouble he was having trying to get hold of a ‘Bohemian’ flag for the handover ceremony. Briefly puzzled, I told him what he needed was a Bahamian flag, much to his relief. I duly attended the hand over with the lowering of the Red Ensign at the stern ensign staff and raising of the new ensign; the code word to the ship’s then captain confirming that the money had been paid over before the ceremony began was: “Perrier”.

After this she would change hands a further eight times, change names five times, including three versions of **Flamenco**, and be re-flagged four times, including those of Sierra Leone at Freetown and Togo at Lomé, not exactly well known maritime nations, rather flags of convenience. She finally ended up in the port of Laem Chebang, Thailand where she was abandoned by her owners, Shanghai Eastime Shipping. She sank at anchor on the 27 February 2016, her

end hardly the **Ocean Dream** of her final name whilst awaiting the breakers or oxidation.

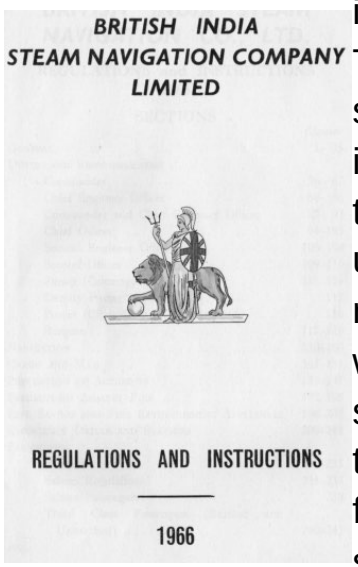
The surgical box was supplied to P&O by Dakin Brothers of Leadenhall Street, London, probably in the early 1950s. It contains pretty much all the instruments for an emergency surgical intervention on the high seas, bar an obstetric or gynaecological emergency. This was however anticipated with a supplementary brown canvas roll, also unwanted, containing a variety of forceps for an assisted delivery, and rescued at the same time. The two sets of forceps, both Wrigley and Milne-Murray axis traction type, plus a full set of Hegar's cervical dilators and different sizes of Sims' curettes are now doing sterling service in a rural hospital in Malawi, rather than gathering dust under a retired ship's surgeon's sofa following an approach to 'AidAfrica'.

Thomas Dakin (1808-1889), later Sir Thomas Dakin, started working for the wholesale and export druggist Messrs. W. Brydan and Company of 23, Abchurch Lane, in the City of London. This became Dakin Brothers in 1859 and which eventually moved to 2/3, Creechurch Lane, Leadenhall Street in 1866. One of many companies supplying surgical instruments, Dakins and Co., like many, did not always make all the instruments, but did supply a variety of boxes with steel trays that were specially made with slots to hold them in their individual places. These boxes varied in the usual manner in terms of complexity, price and the perceived skill of the ships owner and the on-board operator. Basic surgery and orthopaedics could be carried out on board with the instruments provided, but it should be remembered that orthopaedics has often been termed "wet carpentry".

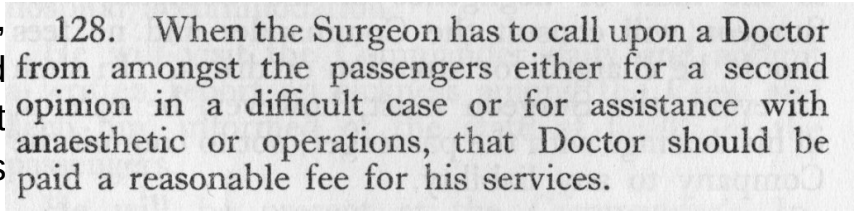
This box appears to be a top of the range model and not the sort that the chief officer of a vessel, with no surgeon, could make much of, even following the instructions of the invaluable "Ship's Captain's Medical Guide" from HMSO and now in its 23rd edition. It is also available as a free download from the internet in pdf format, though a hard copy book is a much better option in the sorts of situations that you would need to look at it or if the computer has crashed or the power failed. The stout brass-screwed mahogany case with a brass lock and side catches is 21" x 11" and 4" deep and has two removable trays of instruments. There is a small lidded metal box attached to the upper tray which holds needles and spare scalpel blades. Pasted to the inside of the lid is a conveniently typed list of all the instruments it should and did hold when dispatched, fortunately only two have been mislaid. There are now 36 instruments including a trephine for boring a very neat 1" diameter hole into an unfortunate crewman's skull. It has a T-handle and a removable centring point to allowing cleaning, the teeth angle set to cut in a clockwise direction, a bit like opening a bottle of wine with a corkscrew, though in these circumstances the less claret the better! The procedure of trepanation is to relieve the pressure on the brain if there has been an internal bleed, such a sub

dural and the evacuation of the "blackcurrant jelly" of clotted blood. Acute subdural haematomas due to trauma are the most lethal of all head injuries and have a high mortality rate if they are not rapidly treated with surgical decompression. If very small and with the patient showing no signs or symptoms of neurological deficit yet, they are better observed and the patient kept rested in bed and not given aspirin for the headache...

There is a hammer, a 9" amputation saw with a skeleton grip and a small 5½" Ferguson metacarpal saw for the wrist bones, if required. Probably the most useful gadget is the very small disc saw for cutting rings off swollen fingers, this was the only one I ever used from the box. A Schimmelbusch mask and some chloroform for a basic rag-and-bottle drip anaesthetic are also seen, but there was in fact a large Boyle's anaesthetic machine supplied by BOC. That was too large to rescue from the ship and was deep-sixed in the days when seafarers did that sort of thing... Still it got a very good send off party when it was committed to the deep along with an ancient dental x-ray unit that was used to take rather good chest x-rays. When these were required the 14" x 14" films used were exposed in cassettes with active phosphors on each side and then clipped into a slightly larger steel wire frame and were developed wet in dip tanks. The three tanks needed held the developer, a constant flow clean water wash tank and a final tank for the fixer solution. So, developer-wash-fixer-wash and allow to dry fully. This was not an easy task in a heavy sea with the chemicals sloshing about and often over the edges of the tanks. There were, of course moments of collateral misuse. An experimental pinhole camera made out of a tea chest and using a 14" x 14" film taped to the back produced an extraordinarily good team photo on the fo'c'sle whilst at Juneau on a very sunny day and a 30 second exposure with an Elastoplast pinhole cover x-ray of an intact Nautilus shell showing the series of chambers was even more impressive.

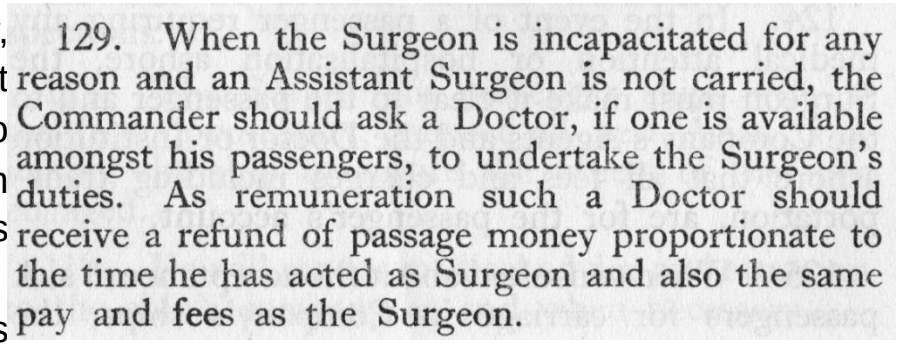


What the surgeon was also supposed to be doing, when not messing about with his box of watercolours, as seen below, was clearly laid out in the little 7¼ x 5" booklet issued in 1966 to all officers when joining the company.


128. When the Surgeon has to call upon a Doctor from amongst the passengers either for a second opinion in a difficult case or for assistance with anaesthetic or operations, that Doctor should be paid a reasonable fee for his services.

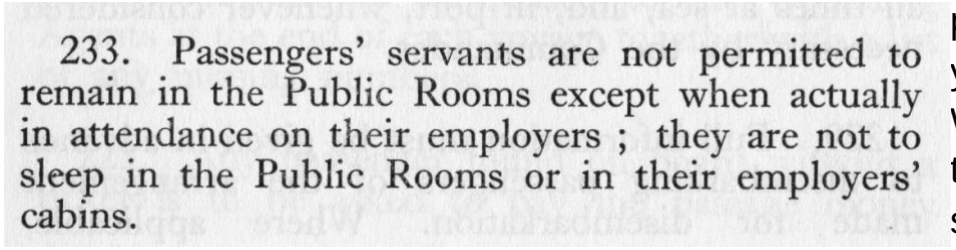
The 12 clauses of the duties and responsibilities of the surgeon are found from pages 32 to 34. Clause 128 allows the surgeon to call upon a doctor from amongst the passengers for assistance.

Clause 129, of a total of 243, instructs the Commander in the event of the surgeon dying or becoming ill and there being no junior surgeon, usually called the "Baby Doc" by the crew, to ask a doctor, if present amongst the passengers, to step in, rather like on an aircraft today when there is a medical emergency.


129. When the Surgeon is incapacitated for any reason and an Assistant Surgeon is not carried, the Commander should ask a Doctor, if one is available amongst his passengers, to undertake the Surgeon's duties. As remuneration such a Doctor should receive a refund of passage money proportionate to the time he has acted as Surgeon and also the same pay and fees as the Surgeon.

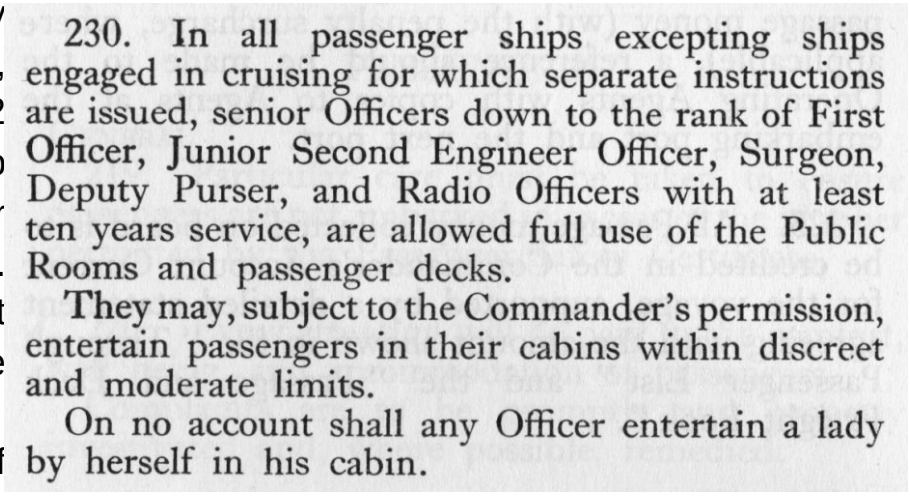
Thus even if the ship's surgeon should die and there be no an assistant surgeon aboard, the Regulations and Instructions (1966) of the British India Steam Navigation Co. Ltd made provision for all of this.

Another rule that will appear both quirky and fascinating in the Little Red , published in 1966, the year that we won the World Cup for football, is the one concerning servants which was quite clear.


233. Passengers' servants are not permitted to remain in the Public Rooms except when actually in attendance on their employers ; they are not to sleep in the Public Rooms or in their employers' cabins.

No mention is made of the medical officer's wine allowance, which on ss **Uganda**, when she was trooping to the Falklands, was one bottle per stripe per week, so three bottles for the surgeon. Perhaps that was a P&O Rule that had made it to the South Atlantic?

The little red book does have at the end of Clause 230: "On no account shall officer entertain a lady by herself in his cabin", however Clause 232 instructs: "Facilities are to be given to passengers for amusement or recreation. Officers may participate at the discretion of the Commander."


230. In all passenger ships excepting ships engaged in cruising for which separate instructions are issued, senior Officers down to the rank of First Officer, Junior Second Engineer Officer, Surgeon, Deputy Purser, and Radio Officers with at least ten years service, are allowed full use of the Public Rooms and passenger decks.

They may, subject to the Commander's permission, entertain passengers in their cabins within discreet and moderate limits.

On no account shall any Officer entertain a lady by herself in his cabin.

Still, best not, even if discreet...although many of us took a chance and were discrete, as it must be said that the attraction for lady passengers of an officer's white mess jacket, shoulder stripes, black bow tie, white dress shirt and thunder-and-lightning trousers was considerable. Monkey Island or the Bridge wing on a balmy and moon lit Caribbean night whilst sailing to the next port were other venues that come to mind again.

Greyhounds of the Irish Sea

by L.N.R.S. Member W.A. Ogle

Only eleven years separated the building by the Isle of Man Steam Packet Co. Ltd. of two iconic steamers. The **Empress Queen** of 1897 and the **Ben-my-Chree** of 1908. The **Empress** was possibly the most powerful paddle steamer to be built, certainly for a cross-channel service, whilst the Ben was the fastest ship operated by the company until arrival of the Sea Cats; the Ben though was an all-weather ship! Let us look in more detail at their specifications:

Empress Queen was built by Fairfields at Govan at a cost of £130,000 and launched on Thursday 4 March 1897. Her boilers and engines also came from her builder. She displaced a tonnage of 2,140 g.r.t.; with length of 360ft 1in.; beam 42ft 3in, draft 17 ft. The engine design was very advanced for its day. She had a boiler steam pressure of 140 pounds per square inch, and her two diagonal three cylinder compound type engines developed 10,000 i.h.p. The single high pressure cylinder was 68 inches in diameter and placed centrally, with the two low pressure cylinders of 92 inch diameter on either side. The stroke was 84 inches and the usual running speed was 44 rpm. This gave **Empress Queen** a service speed of 21.5 knots.

Her engines and paddle wheels were claimed to be the heaviest ever placed in a paddle steamer, with one paddle shaft wheel alone weighing 70 tons. Sixteen firemen worked at her 32 furnaces.

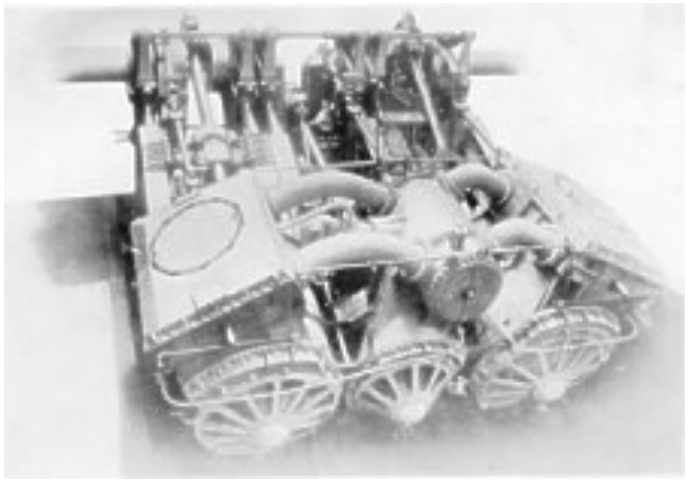
*Note: comparison of the power output from engines of different types is fraught because different formats are used for different types of engine. For a steam reciprocating engine, such as the **Empress Queen**, it is derived from an Indicator Card taken to show the varying steam pressures throughout the stroke to give Indicated Horse Power. For a steam turbine installation the normal approach is by use of a torsionmeter to measure the power being transmitted to the propellor, expressed as Shaft Horse Power. For an internal combustion engine, i.e. diesel, the measurement is normally by dynamometer on the engine output, expressed as Brake Horse Power.*

S.H.P. perhaps the most meaningful, B.H.P. will be reduced in effect by any gearing and the effect of I.H.P. is reduced by friction within the engine. These losses could be c. 10%. There is also loss at the propellor due to slip and a greater level of loss from a paddle wheel which is less efficient and carries a bigger weight burden.

Empress Queen, named to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, entered service in 1897. With a passenger capacity of 1,994 she also carried a crew of 95. In August 1903 she was the first Steam Packet vessel to be fitted with wireless telegraphy and was the last paddle steamer ordered to be built for

the line, but a record breaker for her day. On 13 September 1897 she made passage from the Rock Lighthouse, New Brighton, to Douglas Head (a distance of 68 nautical miles), in 2 hr. 57 min.; at 23 knots the fastest time then recorded. The whole passage from the Princes Landing Stage to Douglas Harbour took three hours and five minutes. As a comparison the post-war steamers which operated from 1946 to 1982 were scheduled for a 4 hour passage at 21 knots. Today's 315ft. wave piercing catamaran is scheduled for 2 hours 45 minutes which is an average of just over 30 knots.

A very popular vessel whose reliability was shown on the 7th July 1903 when she sailed from Liverpool as usual despite a severe gale that kept other ships from sailing or entering port. (Liverpool Mercury 7th July 1903). Only weeks later she became one of the first paddle steamers to be fitted with Marconi wireless telegraphy, which was installed on the run from Liverpool to Douglas on Tuesday August 18 1903. The installation technicians expected that the apparatus would be completed and ready for use either outward or on return trip. This information was taken from the Liverpool Post and Echo Tuesday August 18 1903. She continued to give valued service to and from the Island until she was chartered by the Admiralty on 6 February 1915.



One of her diagonal three cylinder compound engines. At lower centre is the high pressure cylinder head, with the low pressure ones either side.

The **Ben-my-Chree** (Girl of my Heart), was the third vessel in the fleet to carry this name, and was built by Vickers Sons and Maxim at Barrow-in-Furness at a cost of £112,100 and launched on 23 March 1908.

In appearance she was said to resemble a mini Cunarder rather than a conventional cross-channel steamer [Author's note: I never realised that this phrase originated in 1908!], proudly being described by the Company as: "the fastest and most luxuriously appointed channel steamer afloat." [See frontispiece] During the early part of the 20th century, speed of service was very much at the fore for shipping companies plying the Irish Sea routes and an article in the Daily Mail of July 1908 stated:

"*What the **Lusitania** is to the Atlantic the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's new steamer **Ben-my-Chree** will probably be to the Irish Sea. There can, of course, be no comparison as to size between the leviathan Cunarders and the*

speedy little Manx boats, but for years there has been a quiet, determined contest between the vessels of the two Companies for sea-going speed honours. The diminutive boats plying from Liverpool to Douglas claimed pride of place until the advent of the ***Lusitania*** *and* ***Mauritania****. Infected by the competitive spirit, the Directors of the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company resolved that their next vessel should not be far behind the race. The* ***Ben-my-Chree****, it is asserted, can reach over 25 knots and it is expected to reduce the record time (2hrs 56 mins) from Liverpool to Douglas, at present held by the turbine steamer* ***Viking****, by six minutes at least. Apart from the contest for speed honours there are many points of similarity between the Manx vessels and the new Cunard liners.*

At 2,651 g.r.t. a length of 390ft., beam 46ft and draft 18ft 6in her five decks gave a passenger capacity of 2,700 with a crew of 116. Powered by three sets of Parson's single-reduction turbines with steam at 170 lbs./sq in. her power output was 14,000 s.h.p. gave a service speed of 24.5 knots. (She is reputed to have reached a speed of 26.9 knots). The turbines worked in series, with one high-pressure ahead turbine driving the centre shaft, and two low-pressure ahead turbines driving their respective wing shafts. Astern turbines were incorporated in the casing, with each low-pressure turbine fitted with valves to control the admission of steam for ahead or astern working. The high-pressure turbine would run idle when the ship was manoeuvring.

Steam was supplied at a pressure of 170 lbs. per square inch by four double-ended cylindrical Scotch boilers, working under forced draught with closed stokeholds. Each of the boilers was fitted with eight furnaces of the suspension type. The boilers were 16 ft 9in long with a diameter of 20ft 7in.

Ben-my-Chree's five decks comprised lower, main, shelter, promenade and boat decks, and offered ample room for her passengers. The shelter deck was carried right fore and aft, and on each side there was a fine promenade. The centre of this deck consisted of cabins and public rooms while on the two decks below (the main and lower) there were additional public saloons. The first class passengers occupied the forward part of the ship and the second class the after part. There was a wide companionway forward allowing access to all decks via stairways.

Situated on the promenade deck was a tea room which was panelled in grey sycamore and mahogany. Below this there was the Lady's Saloon, which was finished in satin wood and walnut. The smoke room with adjacent bar was situated in the after part of the deck-house on the shelter deck. On the main deck there was the main saloon, which was 80ft. long and 46ft. wide. The first class dining saloon was situated on the lower deck with accommodation for 120 passengers. It also had a handsome appearance, being panelled in mahogany and oak. At the

fore end of the dining saloon on the lower deck there was a saloon for first class passengers. She was also fitted with 8 private cabins located on the shelter deck and were exceptionally well furnished, fitted with sofas, a table and a folding lavatory.

In the second class section there was a large saloon on the main deck and a dining saloon on the lower deck, forward of which was the second class ladies saloon. A large buffet and bar was also provided for the second class passengers. In her first season between Liverpool and Douglas, her average time between the Bar Lightship and the Head was 2 hours 24 minutes. However, her sustained high speeds came at a considerable cost as she used 95 tons of coal in one passage, and these high running costs resulted in her appearing on station only during the peak periods of the summer months; during the rest of the time she was invariably laid up.

She was requisitioned in January 1915, and went to Cammell Laird's for conversion for Admiralty purposes.

War Service

Empress Queen was requisitioned by the Admiralty on 6th February, 1915 and was ideally suited as a troop carrier. On leaving Douglas she steamed to Barrow and was fitted out for her wartime role in less than two weeks. Following her fitting out, she then made passage to Southampton and two days later was on the first of her duties, taking 1,900 men of a Scottish regiment to Le Harve.

She was regarded by the authorities as an exceptionally reliable paddle steamer, never having been stopped for weather or engine trouble, until on February 1, 1916, she was returning to Southampton from Le Havre with 1,300 men on board. The weather was foul, the visibility was but a few yards, when she ran ashore at 0500 hours on the Ring Rocks off Bembridge, Isle of Wight. She ran well up on a rising tide, the wind was light, and the sea was calm. So expectation of recovery was high.

Destroyers took off the troops, the crew remained on board as efforts were made to pull the vessel off. It was not expected to be a difficult task, but the weather changed in a matter of hours and a gale blew up. The crew was then taken to safety over the rocks at low tide.

Regarded as the finest and fastest of her type, she was broken up by the wind and tide as the seasons passed. In 1919 during a long and heavy gale summer gale, she finally disappeared.

Similarly the **Ben-my-Chree** was requisitioned on 1 January 1915 and began her conversion into a seaplane carrier at the Cammell Laird shipyard in Birkenhead the following day. Part of her aft superstructure was removed and replaced by a hangar, aft of her rear funnel, that housed four to six seaplanes. The aircraft were lifted in and out of the water by derricks fore and aft. A dismountable

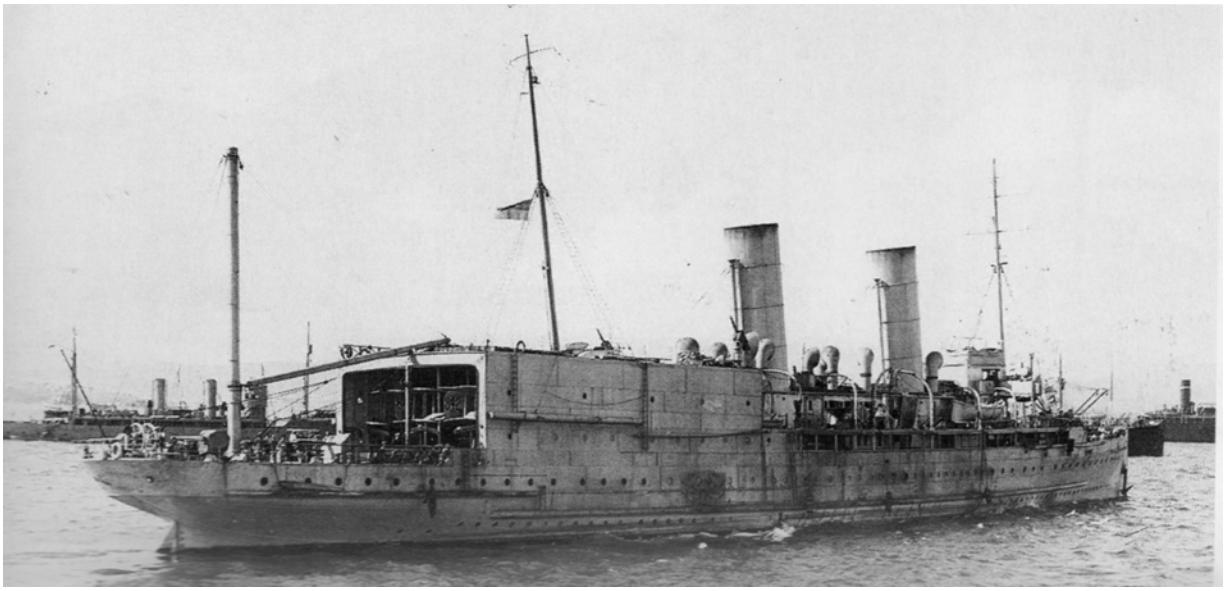
60ft. long flying-off platform was installed forward of her superstructure, equipped with a trolley and rails to allow a seaplane to take off.

As converted the ship displaced 3,950 tons, was 387ft. long overall, and had a draught of 16ft. The ship could carry 510 tons of coal and her crew consisted of approximately 250 officers and enlisted men.

Her armament comprised four quick-firing (QF) 12-pounder 18 cwt guns, and two Vickers three-pounder AA guns. She carried 130 rounds per 12-pounder and 64 rounds for each three-pounder. In May 1916, one 12-pounder AA gun, a three-pounder, and a 2-pounder pom-pom, each on army carriages, were added.

She was initially assigned to the Harwich Force, under the command of Commander Cecil L'Estrange Malone, where on 3 May she took part in an abortive air raid on Norddeich that had to be abandoned because of thick fog.

In May 1915, she sailed for the Dardanelles, carrying two Short Type 184 torpedo bombers, arriving at Lesbos on 10 June. Her aircraft were mainly involved in spotting for ships providing naval gunfire support for troops ashore, although they also conducted reconnaissance missions of the area. On 11 August, one of these missions had spotted a Turkish ship off the north coast of the Sea of Marmora and, on the following day, Flight Commander Charles Edmonds attacked it flying a Short 184 seaplane. He left his observer behind and flew with a reduced



Stern view of HMS Ben-my-Chree, showing the aircraft hangars and after derrick

fuel load to lighten his aircraft enough to carry a 14-inch, 810-pound torpedo. This is the first recorded instance of a sea-based aerial torpedo attack. He successfully dropped his aerial torpedo at a distance of about 800 yards and an altitude of 15 ft. It turned out that his target had been beached after having been torpedoed by the British submarine E14. This was followed by a successful attack on 17 August against a 5,000 ton ship by Edmonds. Flight Lieutenant George Dacre accompanied Edmonds on his flight in his own aircraft, but suffered engine

troubles and had to land in the Dardanelles. He was taxiing on the water when he encountered a large steam tugboat, which he promptly torpedoed. After taxiing for several miles he was able to get airborne again and was within gliding distance of **Ben-my-Chree** when his engine failed permanently.

On 2 September, the Ben helped to rescue Australian troops from the torpedoed troopship H.M.T. **Southland** off Lemnos. At the end of the Gallipoli campaign the ship was transferred to Port Said, becoming the flagship of the East Indies and Egypt Seaplane Squadron when it was formed in January 1916. The squadron's primary duty was to watch Turkish positions and movements in southern Palestine and the Sinai. Later in 1916 **Ben-my-Chree** was based at Aden.

Following deployment by Turkish troops of an artillery battery within range of the Greek island of Kastellorizo which French troops had occupied, the French commander requested a seaplane carrier to conduct reconnaissance in the area and **Ben-my-Chree** was sent in response. She arrived on 11 January 1917 and anchored in the harbour which faced the mainland. The Turkish guns opened fire about two hours later, hitting the carrier with their third shot. Subsequent shells disabled her steering and started a fire in her hangar that spread across her upper deck.

After about forty minutes of bombardment the crew was ordered to abandon ship using the only remaining operable motor lifeboat of the three stowed on board. One officer and four enlisted men were injured, but no one was killed. The Turks continued their bombardment for five hours until **Ben-my-Chree** listed to starboard and sank in shallow water. Later in the day, the captain and the chief engineer returned to the wreck to rescue the ship's mascots, a cat and dog which had both survived the attack. Her wreck remained in place until 1920 when it was refloated by the salvage ship **Vallette** and towed to the port of Piraeus. The ship proved to be a constructive total loss and was broken up in Venice, Italy in 1923.

Sadly these exceptional ships achieved a combined lifespan of only 28 years!

MONDAY MEETINGS

Members meet at the Archives and Library of the Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays as follows:

June	Mondays	3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th
July		1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th
August		5th, 12th, 19th
September		2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th

Flags and Funnels

by LNRS Member W A Ogle

The preceding article quotes the **Ben-my-Chree** as having the appearance of a mini Cunarder. The pictures on the frontispiece show why! Comparison of the ships gives rise to this comparison of two companies. In order of age:

In 1830 The Isle of Man Steam Packet Company Ltd. was founded in Douglas, Isle of Man. It's colours were described as:

Funnel:	Red, black top and two narrow black bands beneath
House Flag:	Red, with Isle of Man Three Legs, S.P. Co. in yellow
Hull:	Black, white superstructure, red underwater & white boot topping

R.M.S. **Lady of Mann** (1930)

R.M.S. Queen Mary (1934)

In 1840, just ten years later, the Liverpool based British and North American Royal Mail Steam-Packet Company (from 1879 known as the Cunard Steamship Company, Ltd.) was formed. In this case its colours were described as:

Funnel:	Red, black top and three narrow black bands.
House Flag:	Red, with Golden Lion rampant holding globe
Hull:	Black, white superstructure, red underwater & white boot topping.

A Manxman might say "imitation is the sincerest form of flattery!

The **San Cirilo** Explosion

by L.N.R.S. Member W.G.Williamson

An article entitled “Exemplary conduct of Radio Officer R.F. Mullen” and published in the Marconi Mariner July/Aug 1955 caught my attention and I decided to investigate it a bit further. On 12th April, 1955 the motor tanker **San Cirilo** was bound from Aruba to Buenos Aires with a cargo of crude oil, when a catastrophic boiler explosion caused eleven of the crew to loose their lives. Radio Officer R.F. Mullen on the directions of the Master, sent out a series of messages for urgent and immediate medical help, appealing particularly to vessels in the vicinity with a doctor on board. The appeal was answered by the Argentine motor vessel **Rio Tercero**. Radio Officer Mullen transmitted the first message with the main installation, but subsequently used the emergency transmitter after the mains power had failed.

Subsequently Mr. Mullen received a letter from the Eagle Oil & Shipping Co, Ltd., stating that the Directors of the Company and the Underwriters insuring the vessel and also the members of their management, who visited the vessel at Trinidad, were greatly impressed by the gallantry and determination displayed by the crew after the explosion and the regrettable heavy loss of life. The letter adds “*such meritorious conduct cannot be allowed to pass unnoticed and this letter is an expression of respect and admiration for your exemplary conduct and disregard for personal safety*.” As a tangible token of their appreciation a gift of a cheque was made to RO Mullen.

M.T. **San Cirilo**

Two days after the explosion a Brazilian Air Force Catalina aircraft reported that the **San Cirilo** was still drifting helplessly off the mouth of the Amazon River, but was unable to land due to rough seas. The pilot radioed to Rio de Janeiro however, reporting that an Argentine ship, the **Rio Tercero**, was now on scene and standing by the crippled tanker.

This vessel had taken seven gravely injured men aboard for medical attention. The **Rio Tercero** had reached the tanker that morning after receiving distress signals concerning the explosion that occurred 500 miles east of

Cavenne, French Guiana. Earlier radio reports from the **San Cirilo** indicated that eight men had been killed and several other members of the crew of 46 injured. The London registered **San Cirilo** was commanded by Captain M. E. Holdron, and owned by Eagle Oil and Shipping Co., Ltd.

The next day, Saturday the 16th April, Captain Dudley W. Mason, (of Ohio and Operation Pedestal fame), the marine superintendent of Eagle Oil announced that the Shell tanker **Thalamus** was ordered to divert from her passage and join up with the **San Cirilo**. It was hoped that the stricken ship would be under way using her own power by the following day.

The same day a newspaper carried the names of some of the victims. Three injured Britons had died it was learned, making a total of 11 deaths. One of the men died on board the Argentine ship **Rio Tercero**, which was taking him to Trinidad. The other two were still on board the **San Cirilo**. They were junior engineer A. J. Rose, of Aberdeen, and deck boy J. Dickens, of Rushden, Northants. Mr. Rose was on his first voyage to sea and had left home just six weeks prior to the incident. Chief Engineer Macaulay on **Thalamus** arranged for the ships 3rd engineer, Mr. T.C.H. Percy; 5th engineer Mr. J Rollinson and another 5th engineer to be put on board the **San Cirilo**. The Cirilo's Chief and Rollinson stood a watch of six hours while Percy and the other 5th from **Thalamus** did the other six hour watch. **Thalamus** stood by until the **San Cirilo** approached Trinidad when she departed for Curacao. After one night in Trinidad, Rollison and his colleagues flew to Curacao to rejoin their ship. They had spent seven hard days aboard the damaged ship.

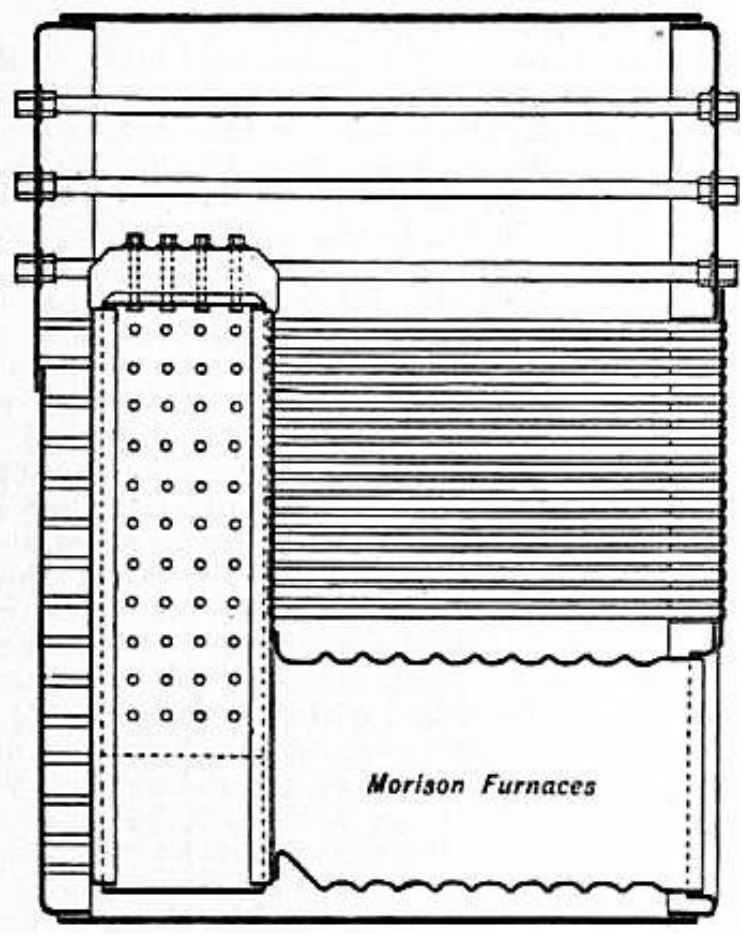
A report in the Shields Daily News from Friday 7th October 1955 is of interest. Third Engineer T. C. H. Percy, of Garden Lane, Cleadon is one five officers of the Shell tanker **Thalamus** who are to receive gold cuff-links for giving assistance to the Eagle Oil tanker **San Cirilo** after a boiler explosion had killed 11 members of the crew off the Amazon delta in April last.

[Editor's Note: *These tragic events can be better understood if some idea of the engine room configuration can be determined, but little is published about* ***San Cirilo****. Fortunately much more is known about her sister ship the* ***San Demetrio****. So it seems probable that although the main propulsion was by an 8 cylinder oil engine of 503 NHP built by J. G. Kincaid & Co. Ltd., Greenock, all the auxiliaries were steam powered; critically this included the generators and probably the cargo pumps. This steam was provided by two cylindrical Scotch boilers having two furnaces in each. In view of subsequent events and comments at the enquiry it is thought likely that although at least the Chief Engineer would have had a combined steam/motor certificate, many of the others may have been motormen, and the importance of 'blowing down' and boiler water testing may not have been seen as critical. It is interesting that the boiler operator was described as a*

fireman-greaser! Furthermore the fact that the main engine was losing lubricating oil may have been their major concern.]

Following inspection and an initial inquiry upon arrival at Trinidad it became clear that the port boiler inboard furnace had ruptured adjacent to the combustion chamber and the boiler contents were ejected into the boiler room. A Lloyd's report also started that the explosion carried away furnace fittings and smokebox, damaged the bulkhead between the boiler room and engine room and projected heavy spare main engine exhaust valves and other debris about the entire room.

The inquiry into the deaths of the men was held by Mr D B. James, the Marine Superintendent, in a small working men's canteen in Tilbury Docks. In giving evidence, the **San Cirilio**'s Chief Steward described how he acted as doctor to nine members of his crew: "I carried the deck boy David Dickens to the ships office where the medical locker was kept. Two other men were brought to me for aid and I treated all three for burns. The master and bosun attended to others and I gave injections of morphia. I am certain the treatment I gave them was right and I carried it out from the instructions in the ships medical guide."



Side view of a Scotch marine boiler.

The Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation ordered a further formal investigation into the boiler explosion on the **San Cirilo** under the Boiler Explosions Act of 1882. This was fixed for Monday, 13th February 1956 and the hearing took place at Church House, Westminster.

During this enquiry the Chief Engineer John Dickinson said he had no idea before the explosion that anything was really wrong with the tanker. He agreed however that the day before the explosion he and the Master, Mr. M. E. Holdron, decided to stop for routine maintenance repairs and because he had noticed a high consumption of lubricating oil. "*I thought that this high consumption of oil should be ascertained as quickly as possible. The repair work was therefore undertaken sooner than previously arranged".*

It was quite usual for the tanker to receive repairs between ports. The **San Cirilo** experienced boiler trouble after leaving Aruba. Asked in cross examination whether the voyage was marked by a large number of stoppages, Mr Dickson replied: "I have been on voyages with more stoppages." Asked whether the six stoppages on the voyage out to Aruba had been forced upon the tanker, Mr Dickson replied "I suppose you could say that".

Outlining the facts to the Legal Commissioner, Mr A.A. Mocatta Q.C. who sat with Mr Ivor J. Gray as Engineering Commissioner, Council for the Ministry said the Cirilo had always enjoyed Lloyd's highest class for that, type of vessel. Mr Dickson has said he thought it possible that the cause the accident was scaling caused by salt water entering the boiler but the presence of salt water in the boiler had never been reported to him. He said; 'The furnace would become overheated due to excessive scaling preventing conduction of heat through the furnace to the water. The plate would become malleable and therefore losing its strength collapse, and eventually fracture.

Questioned about a bulge in the furnace which the fireman-greaser said he had reported to one of the engineers before the explosion, Mr Dickson said, "It is absurd and is such a serious thing to have a boiler bulging that for any engineer to ignore it is beyond my comprehension, and I very much doubt that the greaser did see such a thing."

Mr. Trevor Martin Calvert, a metallurgist, who had carried out a metallurgical examination, produced a set of micro photographs taken of metal from the furnace. He said that those showed the material to be very good, that no overheating, in the metallurgical sense, had occurred and that the steel had not been in excess of a temperature of 850 degrees C. His view was that, although there was no overheating in the metallurgical sense, the boiler plating must have been overheated to such an extent as to become "plastic", and that following on from that, a cracking of the scale occurred. Water in direct contact with the "plastic" plating could cause a rupture. He did not see any evidence from his investigation to prove what temperatures rupture of the plate could be expected.

The findings of this enquiry were widely reported in press reports of the time. Giving the findings at the Law Courts, London, Mr Mocatta said that the commissioners found that the Chief Engineer, Mr John Dickson and the second, third and fourth engineers were all to blame in respect of the explosion. Had they been more careful in carrying out their duties the excessive entry of sea water into the boiler would have been ascertained. The cause of the boiler explosion was a failure in the inboard furnace of the port boiler due to overheating. Resulting from heavy scale forming on the water side the furnace due to substantial quantities of sea water being allowed into the boilers. The source of this sea water being excessive leaks in the condenser.

The findings continued: “We cannot avoid the conclusion, distasteful though It may be, that in the case of the second, third and fourth engineers, they must in part bear responsibility for the explosion in that they did not carry out the regular and proper tests they should have carried out as to the density of the boiler and themselves carried out not infrequent 'blow-downs’ of the boilers. Had the Chief Engineer "paid sufficient close attention to the engine room he could not have failed to have noticed ‘blow-downs' not taking place and the unsatisfactory condition of the boiler fittings. If he had noticed this there is little doubt he would have opened up the port boiler before the explosion and in this way the scale would have been discovered."

In view of their findings about the responsibility of the Chief Engineer, the commissioners felt that he should pay part of the costs of the inquiry and they stipulated £50.

RMS **Queen Mary**

by LNRS Member, Glyn L Evans

My reason for writing this article stems from an item which appears in “Sea Breezes” magazine for December 2018, headed The Great Cunarders, and in particular the comment regarding RMS **Queen Mary** viz, “Unfortunately, recent years have seen some grim news emerge of the extent of the work required on this famous ship.....which cast doubt on its long term future given its current state.”

A posting on the internet dated April 2018, confirms this view. To quote, “More than a dozen critical **Queen Mary** maintenance projects approved in 2016 have been sidelined or have yet to be started due to cost over-runs and unforeseen expenses. The projects, identified in a 2015 marine survey that analysed the ship’s condition, were recommended by a team of naval architects and marine engineers who predicted a bleak future for the **Queen Mary** – including some internal collapse over the next ten years - if the work wasn’t done soon. The survey, released in March 2017, estimated repair costs at $235 million to $289 million. In November 2016 the city of Long Beach approved $23 million to pay for the most urgent repairs.”

As is well-known in shipping circles the world over, actual repair costs almost invariably exceed estimates by a wide margin and, as if proof were needed, the article goes on to report:

- Repairs and replacement of rotted teak wood decking and roofing. The work was budgeted for $2.1 million, but has so far cost over $7 million.
- Safety corrections to a lengthy list of issues, ordered by the Long Beach Fire Department, were budgeted for $200,000. The work, which is nearly complete, has so far cost $4.8 million.
- A revamp of the Ghosts and Legends Tour is the only major project on the list to have been completed. Budgeted for $2 million, it cost $3.8 million.

During my stay on board **Queen Mar**y back in 2005, the scale of the work to be done was apparent and the cost could only be guessed at. A walk along the Promenade Deck gave an opportunity to admire the rows of potted plants that lined its sides. It was only the next morning, after heavy overnight rain, that one realised the need for the pots – to collect the water that pours in from the Boat Deck above. A late evening stroll along the Boat Deck gave me an opportunity to admire the starry night sky – this could be viewed through the rusty holes in the bottom of the lifeboats.

In 1967, when the city of Long Beach purchased **Queen Mary**, it seemed like a dream come true for those many people who wished to see the old ship saved from the scrapper's torch. Now the dream is becoming a nightmare as even the residents of Long Beach appear to be turning their back on what has been described as the city's "Statue of Liberty." A selection of posted comments includes:

- It's unfortunate that the Mayor has an ongoing love-affair with a rusted-out piece of junk that you can't even give away. He is on the verge of holding us, the taxpayers, responsible for a city-issued $300 million bond to resuscitate this worthless piece of scrap. This project is an absolute money LOSER for us.... time to SINK THE QUEEN.
- Seriously, the only money the city should put out for this tub is for a box of dynamite to turn it into a reef.
- Sell the whole thing to anyone who will take it even for junk value. The city will never get the value out of it.

When one reads comments like these from residents of the city that bought the old girl, and takes into account the cost of keeping her afloat, then the phrase "doubts about her long-term future" seems like a gross understatement. We must, unfortunately, face the fact that she will never come back to the UK. Perhaps she should never have left in the first place, but then, in the UK, we have a poor track record for preserving our national historic treasures. The old ship was too broad in the beam to transit the Panama Canal on her way to the US western seaboard

All of these paintings are by Kenneth D. Shoesmith. The above, named 'Market Mural', is exhibited in what was the 1st class smoking saloon.

The above, 'A Fishing Boat Scene' is on the screen doors that hide the altar when not in use.

To the left is 'Madonna of the Atlantic', which is on the altar screen in one of the chapels on board.

back in 1967 and so made the voyage around Cape Horn under her own power. Today, she has no motive power, her propeller shafts have been cut through and her engines and boilers removed. No chance then of her being towed back here when even the word "unseaworthy" seems like a euphemism for her actual state.

Whatever fate befalls **Queen Mary**, it is vital that the baby is not thrown out with the bathwater, the baby in this case being the vast treasure of artwork that remains on board. When Cunard conceived the idea of a modern transatlantic liner in 1930, they called for artwork and designs from the leading lights of the day, people such as Doris Zinkeisen, Bainbridge Copnall, Edward Wadsworth, Philip Connad, John Skeaping, Macdonald Gill and Kenneth D Shoesmith. My interest centres on the work of the latter that still exists on board and which I would be devastated to see disappear without trace in the event of the ship being scrapped.

From the images that accompany this article you will see what could be lost, and I am sure you will agree with me that such treasures deserve to be saved. For this reason I will be keeping a sharp look-out for developments in **Queen Mary**'s future and I hope that you will do likewise. In a more pro-active way, I would like to see a consortium of British maritime interests make an approach to the city of Long Beach with a pre-emptive offer to buy the **Queen Mary** art treasures and have these returned to the UK. Here they could be put on permanent display as a great attraction of historic importance. One venue that springs to mind is the Cunard building on the Liverpool waterfront, one of the Three Graces in this Unesco world heritage area of the city that already attracts a huge visitor footfall.

Book Review

Ships of the Chester River
by L.N.R.S. Member Richard Martin

Published by: Bridge Books, 2019 272 pages, 63 plates

ISBN : 978-1-84494-116-2 £16.00

This proved to be an interesting read about the shipbuilders and the vessels they have built on the Dee estuary since 1800, written by one of our long standing members. It is not a subject previously covered in a book, unlike other North Wales and North West ports such as Portmadoc, Amlwch, Runcorn and Birkenhead.

The book covers the story of some of the 600 vessels built in these yards and it is surprising how many there were and how far across the oceans they travelled. The Dee is always viewed as the Mersey's poor relation in terms of shipping and people would be mistaken if they thought it was only coastwise and Irish trade vessels that were built. Some took convicts to Australia, others carried rubber down the Amazon and guano from Peru.

The city of Chester itself had commercial shipyards on the River until 1870 - how many people realise that so many deep sea traders were built there in the age of sail? Many of the ships were ordered by Liverpool merchants at times when shipbuilding space was at a premium in Liverpool's growing dock system.

The book is available throughout the North West and North Wales in bookshops, garden centres and museums and of course on Amazon.

His Majesty's Motor Anti-Submarine Boat - H.M. **M.A/S.B. 27**

This article provides the background to the talk to the Society by John Phipps on Thursday, March 21, 2019

by Bill Ogle

This story began 100 years ago on 20th September 1916 when Hubert Scott-Paine incorporated the Supermarine Aviation Company Ltd. in Southampton. Scotty's passion was flying boats and in 1917 a new draughtsman was taken on: Reginald Joseph Mitchell who, of course, went on to achieve immortality as the creator of the Spitfire.

Although Supermarine developed world beating flying boats, winning the coveted Schneider Trophy in 1927, 1929 and 1931, Scotty's new passion was for fast motor boats. Later in wartime, these boats became known as the "Spitfires of the Sea". Built of strong but lightweight construction, powered by huge engines, the MTBs, MGBs, MA/SBs and HSLs were capable of speeds up to 45 knots.

Research into **MA/SB 27**'s wartime service uncovered an amazing story of British enterprise, engineering ingenuity, determination and courage during the 1920s & 30s, iconic names regularly appear. Just as Henry Royce went ahead with his Merlin engine under the enterprising title of PV-12 (private venture/12 cylinders) so Scott-Paine similarly set about spending his own money on a new gunboat identified as PV-70 (private venture/70 feet).

What followed was the building of MTBs (Motor Torpedo Boats), MGBs (Motor Gunboats) and MA/SBs (Motor Anti Submarine Boats) which were fitted with the latest ASDIC equipment for protection of estuaries and coastal waters. As the RAF became interested in Air-Sea Rescue boats, they sent Aircraftsman T.E. Shaw to work on their development; better known as Lawrence of Arabia.

In 1939, just as Poland was being invaded, Scott-Paine left for America where he met with President Roosevelt who promptly committed $5 million for U.S. industry to adopt these advanced designs which became known as PT (Patrol Torpedo) Boats. It was one of these craft, PT-109, whose skipper was John F. Kennedy, later to become the 35th President of the USA.

As the War progressed the expected threat from enemy U-boats acting in coastal waters did not materialise. No longer required for protection of ports and estuaries, most MA/SBs were converted to MGBs or redeployed to Air Sea Rescue. For her part, **MA/SB 27** was ordered on 4 Sep 1939 and classified as a BPB 63 feet type commissioned from the Hythe Yard of the British Power Boat Company on 26 June 1941 and she went into a busy and dangerous period of Royal Navy service. As well as air/sea rescue duties, she spent some time running between Cornwall and Brittany on clandestine operations. Under the direction of the Special Operations Executive, **MA/SB 27** was engaged in

dropping agents into France and collecting RAF crew members assisted by the Resistance.

'**27**' On exercise during WWII

After secretly operating off the Normandy coast during April and May 1944, taking sand samples and checking the approaches, reports from former crew members confirm that, on the early morning of D-Day, **MA/SB 27** was engaged in support of the US 1st Division in its initial assault on Omaha Beach. After the beachhead was secured and troops could move inland, 27 remained in that area using her ASDIC to direct construction of 'Mulberry A' which was the artificial harbour established off Omaha.

Many of these boats were scrapped in 1945; some were used as target boats for gunnery practice and some timber gunboats were sold off to become houseboats. All armaments were removed and the three 24 litre Napier engines were taken out. In many cases, gunboat engines had been supplied by Packard under the Lend- Lease Agreement with the United States, and were duly returned after hostilities.

In November 1945 **MA/SB 27** was purchased by Lt. Commander (retd.) John Humphrey Yorath and was converted for use as a houseboat in static family use in the Chichester area. Having served this purpose for 35 years, and on the death of John Yorath in 1980, his family sold the boat to a Russian enthusiast whose ambitious plan was to convert 27 into a luxury motor launch. Work was commenced by Hamble Yacht Services, removing the military superstructure and changing much of the interior layout. However, the new owner ran out of money, leaving the boat to be repossessed to settle debts.

The old gunboat was again offered for sale, now in a deteriorated condition. After a couple of years, journalist Jonathan Eastland made what he called a 'reluctant purchase' with a view to carrying out a restoration. For the time being he converted 27 to a habitable houseboat and that was how she remained for another twenty years.

Acknowledging that restoration plans were beyond his capability, Mr. Eastland sold the boat to Owen Childs who moved her to Watchet Harbour in Somerset. Although some work was carried out towards a restoration, once again

the project was judged too daunting and costly so, in 2016, ‘D-Day Revisited’ purchased what remained of **MA/SB 27** for a total restoration.

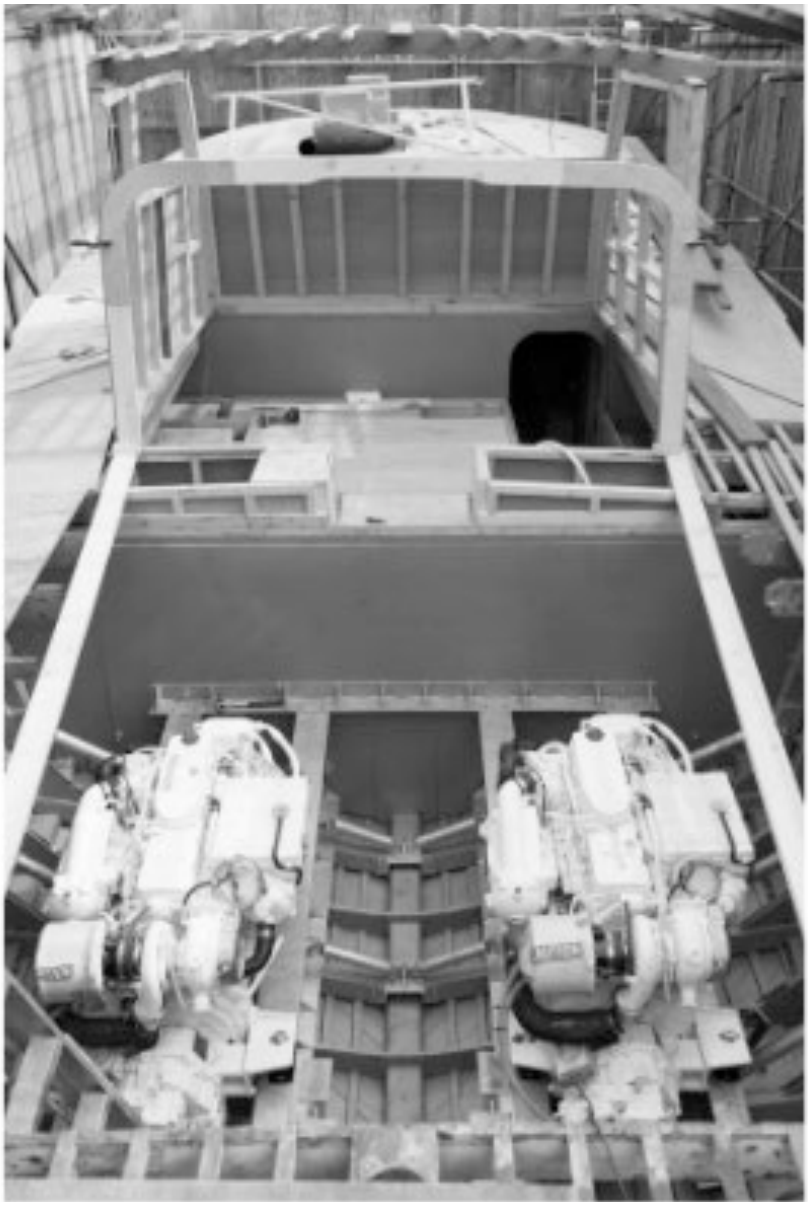
D-Day Revisited was first established in October 2008 for the primary purpose of funding a 65th anniversary visit by British Armed Forces Veterans to the Normandy landing sites and surrounding region. Now a registered charity, it aimed to run similar pilgrimages each year leading up to the 75th Anniversary, giving veterans the opportunity to make that emotional journey and remember their fallen comrades.

The charity, which is based at Hawarden Airfield, near Chester, also embarked on a number of associated projects. In April 2016 they took on our MA/SB 27 and moved her by road to Hawarden, the aim being to restore 27 to her former glory in time for the 75th anniversary of D-Day in June 2019, when she will join fellow Coastal Defences veteran vessels in her first cross-Channel journey to Normandy since the war!

Arriving at Hawarden - all pictures courtesy D-Day Revisited.

75 years old in 2016, the good news was that 27 still had a sound hull, originally built in double diagonal Honduras mahogany, the structure had survived remarkably well. Using historic MoD drawings and 1940s photographs the hull was refurbished externally and internally. A new superstructure and deck will then be fitted together with deactivated weapons to replicate the original Vickers and Lewis guns, although the rear deck mounted Oerlikon ‘Pom-Pom’, which was included during a late war-time refit, will not feature under the restoration plan.

The original Napier Sea Lion engines were W12 in geometry, having three banks of four cylinders sharing a common crankcase with a swept volume of 24 litres. Each could produce 550 horsepower for short periods, more comfortably 500 HP in maintained cruise. Three of these engines were installed in 27 – giving a total maximum output of 1,650 HP. To replicate this, Cummins Engines have provided three straight six turbodiesel marine engines from their Darlington factory, each capable of a matching the 550 HP. Ultimately **MA/SB 27** will once



again become a fully seaworthy vessel.

Housed safely within the secure estate at Hawarden, work has progressed well in repairing patches of hull damage caused by wet rot. New mahogany boarding is being used to match original timbers, and most of the original structure is being saved, treated and improved for extended life. The major engineering cost at some £125,000 is purchase of the three Cummins turbodiesel engines including marine accessories and transmissions. Initial purchase, and accumulated costs are expected to total £400,000, a lower than expected figure mainly due to donated, skilled labour. In addition, the covered working area at Hawarden has been donated free of charge for the duration. Specialist engineering skills are available at the Airbus Estate from the primary company supporting ‘D-Day Revisited’, with mostly free-of-charge utilities and office facilities.

MA/SB 27 is to be the “Surviving Veteran”: a tribute to the wartime Coastal Forces and those who protected the British Isles when under threat of invasion. As a finished vessel there will be opportunity for young cadets to learn seamanship on a veteran craft. Hopefully initially to be based alongside the Liverpool Albert Dock, **MA/SB 27** will return to Normandy in June 2019 in tribute and is expected to take part in many commemorative events.

Subject to settlement of costs, the final destination of **MA/SB 27** is planned to be the Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust where her future in national ownership and care can be assured. It is hoped the gunboat can spend some time berthed in the North of England, and in Scotland, so that some regional balance is provided, moving away from the established trend for all such vessels being held on the Channel Coast.

John Phipps has kindly provided a progress report as at end March, 2019:

General: A delay in outer coating of hull and superstructure presented a knock-on effect which upset the schedule. Arguably, choosing this type of coating on an elderly timber boat is pioneering, yet as far as can be judged before launch, the decision is vindicated: it is an impressive outcome.

However, launching into the Vittoria Dock in Birkenhead is no longer possible as we have run out of time for the coastal passage from Liverpool to Portsmouth. Instead, to recover that delay of four weeks, **MA/SB 27** will be taken to the south coast by road. Arrangements are now in place for a crane lift on 1st May, for onward journey by extended low-loader trailer. The following day our restored gunboat will be lifted into the water at the Hamble Point Marina near Southampton.

Subject to successful commissioning and sea trials, the crossing to Normandy for the 75th anniversary of D-Day remains within reach. For **MA/SB 27**, this will be her first return to Normandy since June 1944 when our gunboat was in action supporting the US assault on Omaha Beach.

Deck: With superstructure coating complete, preparations to lay the Sapele/ mahogany deck planking commenced on 18th March with completion of mahogany deck surfacing expected by 12th April.

The hand-cranked windlass is being restored and a stainless steel stemhead fitting has been fabricated, including a short tube for running the anchor chain, which should be ready by late April. Other important accessories are being fabricated to order, such as gunmetal deck cleats, wheelhouse roof wind and spray screen, turret mountings (with spray covers), transmission and throttle controls. These orders are being supplemented by a stock of heritage fittings, many of which have been generously donated.

Superstructure. All is complete and undergoing finishing touches to the access steps and metal handrails. The replica Vickers Mark 5 turret is being fitted out with steel mountings for the twin Vickers .50 calibre machine guns.

Hull. All complete, with ongoing works to make connections underneath. With the three main sea intakes for engine cooling in place, connections are now being

made for WC inlets, waste water and bilge pump outlets, drive shafts/P brackets, propellers and rudders.

Engine Room. Work is ongoing. Connection of drive shafts now allows final setting of engine mounts, ensuring precise alignment with stuffing box seals. Air intakes are being connected to the superstructure vents, and exhaust tubing is being routed through to the transom. Electrical connections are complete, with appropriate batteries in place.

Interiors. Painting remains behind schedule due to other priorities. Interior doors are all fitted. Upholstered bunk mattresses are ready to be put in place once decorations permit. Galley and heads are complete, subject to final decoration and testing of all plumbing systems.

Electrical & Controls. Aside from mast-head, navigation lights and some sundry installations, the electrical system is complete. The design includes 24 and 240 volts, with a battery inverter installation. The dashboard is in place, awaiting several additions which include magnetic compass, speed over water indicator/log and rudder position indicator, both in stock. The restored throttle system is expected to be ready to install imminently, as is the forward/neutral/reverse transmission control.

Raymarine fitters are booked to complete that installation of navigation, radar, depth sounder and radio equipment on 8th April.Steering. Since completion of under-hull coatings, installation of steering equipment is currently in progress. This is expected to be completed by mid-month.

Registration. This has been completed with the MCA under the registered name of **MASB 27**.

Latest News Flash

MASB 27 was launched at 1145 on Friday 3rd May. Still not quite ready, but she was carefully reintroduced to the salt water of the Solent. The launch was recorded by Forces TV and can be seen on this link:

https://www.forces.net/news/rare-wwii-anti-submarine-boat-restored-d-day

She was craned in at Hamble Point Marina. Having been built just over the estuary at Hythe in 1940/41, and also having spent many postwar years as a houseboat moored at Swanwick, in many senses the old girl was coming home.

American Mails

from Lloyd's List -2nd July, 1874

On Tuesday afternoon a deputation of merchants and others interested in the commerce between England and America, waited upon Lord John Manners at the General Post Office, to request that greater facilities of postal communication between the two countries than those already existing should be granted by the Post Office authorities. Mr. Charles Seely, M.P., who introduced the deputation, said there were certain disadvantages in the present postal arrangements, more especially with reference to the White Star Line of Packets. They were the swiftest steamers on the Atlantic, yet they carried no mails. It was next to impossible to get the bill of lading and the consulate invoice, which were required in New York. This is before goods could be delivered to the persons to whom they were consigned, signed soon enough to go in the ship that took the goods. Then they were consequently sent by the mail steamer which called at Queenstown on Friday. But the White Star vessels which left Liverpool on Thursday arrived at New York a day earlier than the mail steamer, and the vessel with the goods had either to be detained for unloading till the documents arrived, or the goods had to be warehoused in New York at the expense of the consignees. To such an extent had this gone on that shippers of goods stated that unless there was some change they would be obliged to send their goods by other vessels. The proposal of the deputation was that the White Star steamers, which now left on the Thursday, should leave on the Wednesday, by which arrangement all parties who wished to write to America could write a day later than by the Tuesday's mail, and in all probability they would arrive a day earlier than at present. Practically there was no mail now from Saturday till Thursday; on account of the slowness of the mail steamer that left on the Tuesday, the steamer that left on the Thursday overtaking her. The United States sent never less, and sometimes more than four steamers with mails every week to this country. He was aware that his Lordship might be afraid of the cost, but the White Star Line only asked to be put upon the same footing as the German Lloyd's, to carry letters at the rate at which ship letters were paid for. But he thought that the

Charles Seely, M.P. for Lincoln
1847 - 85

extra mail from Liverpool to New York would cause an additional number of letters to be sent. Another proposal the deputation wished to make was that the clerks who were charged with sorting the American letters en route between Chester and Holyhead should throw aside into a separate bag those which were conspicuously addressed in a red or blue envelope ‘per White Star Line,’ and that company would have an officer waiting at Queenstown to receive them and forward them.

The deputation further addressed his Lordship, and urged among other things that the poorer classes would be benefited, as the White Star Line offered to carry post cards free of charge. Lord John Manners said he admitted the great importance of the subject, and he was sure that the more he admitted its importance the more the deputation would agree with him that they could not expect him to give an answer other than a general one. It ought to receive great

Queenstown (Cobh) in 1868 Wikimedia Commons

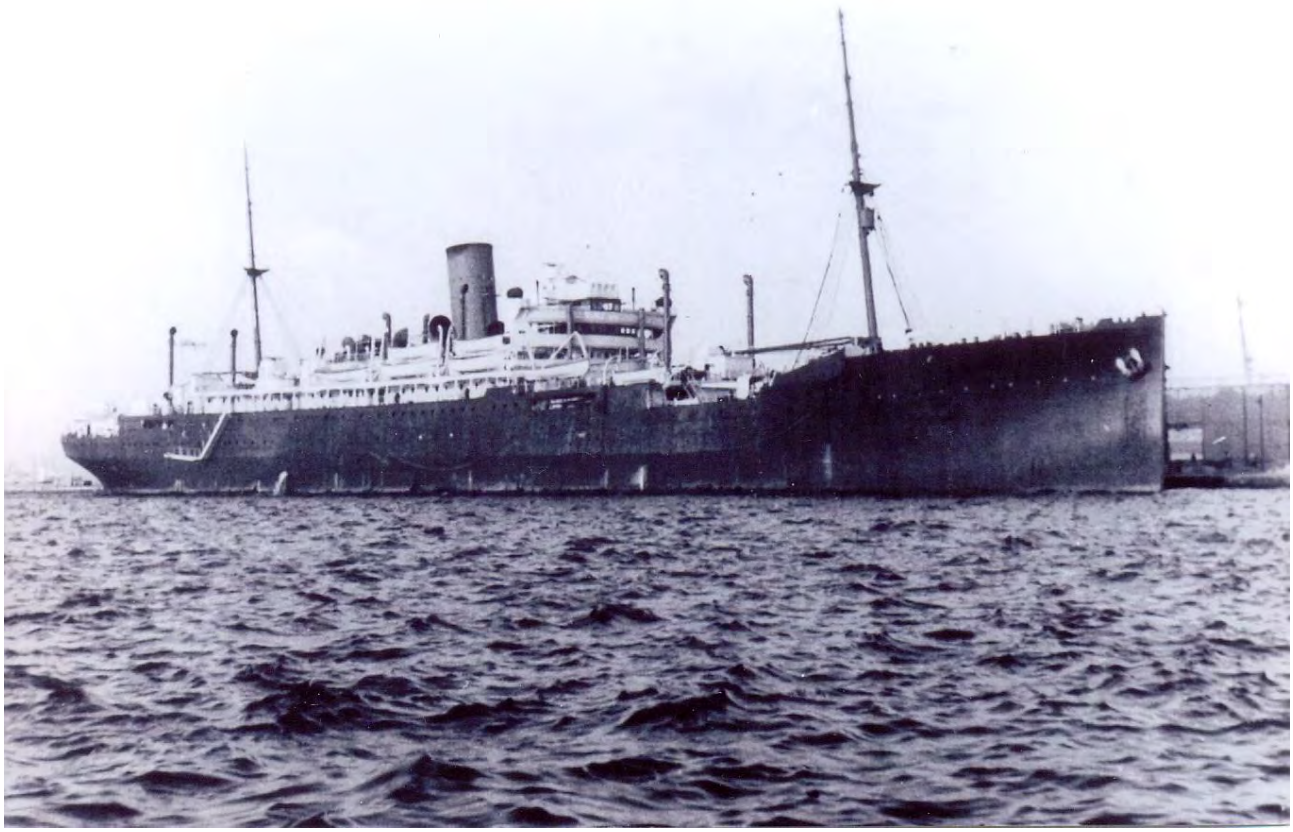
attention and consideration before his Department could make up its mind on effecting the object the deputation had in view. Mr. Holms would confirm him when he said that it would require a new contract, and a new contract would entail expense and delay, which a prudent Government would not like to bring before the House of Commons. Mr. Holms had referred to the subject of postal cards and the convenience it would be to the poorer people to have them conveyed without extra cost to their friends in America. He might remind Mr. Holms that the poorer classes had not availed themselves much of the facilities given by the post cards. He would give the matter, however, his best consideration, and carefully weigh the statements which had been made. The deputation then withdrew.

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

The Bulletin Volume 63, No. 2, September 2019

Contents

*The four masted steel barque **Juteopolis**, 2842 tons, anchored in an unidentified port. Courtesy State Library of South Australia . Print PRG 1373/7/95. See page 40*



*H.M.S.**Jervis Bay** at Dakar in early 1940 Picture from Wikimedia See page 13*

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Chairman's Annual Report - May 2019

I think that we have all at some time or other during the past year commented how quickly time flies. To me it seems just months since I was here summarising the key issues that your Council had been dealing with during last year. Since then it has been an exceptionally busy time as you will discover as each officer presents their own Report. My own in May 2018 commented on the work undertaken by Council and without hesitation I must describe them as a very hard-working and dedicated group involved in dealing with demands generated by an almost continuous flow of considerations.

Let us look back over what this year has meant to us. After its closure, which extended for some 15 months, the Maritime Museum Archive Library reopened on 3rd December. It was far, far longer than we had originally anticipated. Little did we realise at the onset that it would impact so significantly and, with Council members used to weekly meetings with each other, these sessions had to be relegated to the Museum Café which was not an ideal location within which to conduct business. Anyway the Archive is now open each Monday and Tuesday and the Society tendency has been to opt for the former of these two days. Hopefully we shall gradually encourage even more Members to join in taking advantage of this excellent facility, so do please come along.

Being no different to any other similar organisation, we have relied on statistical accounts to monitor our activity. We did lose a number of members last year for a whole variety of reasons, around a dozen or so if I remember correctly. We had been maintaining a membership figure of around 210. I am pleased to report that this has been preserved and we have been pleased to welcome a whole batch of new members. This is really good news. To those of you attending your first, and hopefully not your last, AGM may I extend a very warm welcome, I understand that everyone appreciates the Athenaeum Club remains an ideal venue for these occasions and you know that we try to keep a record of attendance for these monthly meetings. The average for this season apart from today has been 48 members. The Club staff continue to be most helpful and accommodating towards our needs, in friendly fashion I might add, and this is much appreciated.

Let us move on to matters of considerable importance in effectively maintaining the Society. Once again, we are no different to any other society in which income and expenditure must play a significant part. In this recent period we have seen the cost of producing our Bulletin increase considerably coupled with recently announced postal increases. It is however important to note that until now we have been able to control this cost but our Membership Subscription can no longer meet the necessary amount. More about this in much greater detail in a few minutes time when our Treasurer takes the stage. I should perhaps add at this juncture that Tony Melling has taken over this responsibility during the year from Vin Finn whom I gather is now spending much more time with his pet interest in refurbishing a recently acquired boat. Thank you Vin, and of course particularly Tony, who is now expected to undertake some creative accounting to

make each pound go that little bit further. You can see from the Agenda that he will have the opportunity to explain further in a moment.

Let me seriously recommend that following the AGM some of you leave here and boot up your PC and type in Liverpool Nautical Research Society and examine the extent of content. This is all down to our Webmaster Ted Scaplehorn, and also let me add his combined role as Honorary Secretary. I know for a fact that he has worked tirelessly in recent months to set this up. Thank you Ted… very much indeed. You will hear more from Ted shortly.

This leads me on to reflect on the special commemorative Bulletins that were published during the course of 2018. From all accounts these were a great success. Once the remaining Council Members had agreed a suitable cover for each issue, it was down to Editor Bill Ogle to produce interest-winning issues throughout the year.

Let me stop there for just a brief moment to welcome any comments regarding the Bulletin. I know for a fact the Bill always appreciates feedback be it good or otherwise to guide his future intentions.

And so, as is always the case, we shall shortly enjoy our regular monthly presentation and I should like to acknowledge Ian for organising a very interesting series of talks covering such a wide range of topics. Ian has lots of the same lined up for the new season starting in September.

It was good to see so many Members join in the Christmas lunch and I understand that thoughts are already turning to what arrangements will apply this next time.

Thanks to all of you who brought in books for the annual sale and equally so for all who took advantage in purchasing much of what was available.

Let me not forget someone who has been closely watching what goes on behind the scenes. I am thinking of Vice Chairman Elfyn Hughes who in a few minutes time will have completed his 12 months apprenticeship and will be taking over the Chair for these next two years. He and I have enjoyed many conversations and discussions during this recent period and I can say without any hesitation that Elfyn has his own special and personal style of approach to his new role which I am sure you will quickly appreciate.

There has been another side to all this news. It has been a feeling of great sadness, perhaps more so than other previous occasions, at the loss of some prominent members of the Society. How could we possibly lose three prominent honorary members within little more than a six months period of time. During the autumn months Harry Hignett passed away. He was quite a character and someone that we could all turn to for help and support in our maritime searches. Harry knew where everything was. Earlier this year Captain Graeme Cubbin passed away following a short illness. Graeme attracted well deserved respect from everyone with his lifetime involvement with the Harrison Line and in particular his fascinating comprehensive history of that company, its ships and seafarers. Also, as you have just heard, William J Pape II, or as I knew him Bill Pape a renowned Newspaper publisher and Editor of the Republican- American. Bill had long-

standing family links with Liverpool which were so thoroughly researched by member Gordon Bodey some 20 years ago. Bill Pape remained proud of his Liverpool heritage. He was also keenly interested in the work of the Society and an extremely generous donor in supporting Society initiatives which we have very much appreciated.

The Team, in other words our small Council has worked extremely hard throughout the year and I should like to applaud the support they have given to me during my term of office. I am quite sure the same will apply when Elfyn succeeds me in a few minutes time. Thank you. To everyone.

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting
held at the Athenaeum, Liverpool
on 16 May 2019

Present: 40 Members

Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies: The Vice-Chairman welcomed Members to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from John Stokoe (Chairman), Gwynneth Carroll, Peter Head, Cedric Loughran, Angela Oates and Jim Slavin. A quorum of members being present, the meeting was duly constituted and called to order.

Item 2 – Acceptance of the Minutes of the 2018 AGM: The Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting had been published in the September 2018 edition of The Bulletin and were available at this meeting. The minutes were accepted as a true record. Proposer: Willie Williamson. Seconder: Bob Settle. Accepted: Nem Con.

Item 3 – Chairman's Annual Report: The Vice-Chairman delivered the Annual Report on behalf of the Chairman. The report is attached and will be published in the September edition of The Bulletin and on the website.

Item 4 – Financial Report and Approval of 2018-2019 Accounts: The Treasurer presented the independently examined 2018-2019 accounts which are attached. The Society's financial position had deteriorated over the year with cash reserves falling from £7994 in March 2018 to £5994 in March 2019. This was largely due to a substantial increase in the cost of printing The Bulletin, a major investment in developing the website and the purchase of 80th-anniversary merchandise coupled to a significant reduction in donation income. Although comparison with the previous year was not straightforward because of the ongoing introduction of Standing Order subscription payment and the re-categorisation of several expenditure items, it was clear that the Society was currently

operating at a deficit which could not be allowed to continue. Proposer: Tom Cunningham. Seconder: Don Watt. Approved: Nem Con.

Item 5 – Subscription Rates for 2020-2021: The Treasurer presented his Budget Forecast for 2020-21 which is attached. At the projected reduced levels of income and known levels of expenditure, the budget deficit was estimated to be £750. Various cost-reduction measures were being introduced but these would not offset increases on the major expenditure items. The cost of printing The Bulletin, for example, had increased by 40% since 2017/2018. Subscription rates had remained static for ten years and the Council had reluctantly decided to recommend increasing them by £5 from April 2020 in order to balance the budget. The new rates would therefore be: Ordinary Membership £20; Joint Membership £25; Overseas Membership £25. On a suggestion from the floor, it was agreed that a discount (level to be determined by Council) would be offered to members who opted-out of receiving the printed Bulletin in favour of an electronic version. Proposer: Yvonne Foley. Seconder: Andy Forbes. Agreed: Nem Con.

Item 6 – Talks Programme for 2019-2020: The Programme Secretary outlined the Talks Programme for the forthcoming season commencing 19 September. Members were reminded that because of the legal maximum capacity (60) of The Athenaeum Library, it was essential to seek permission from the Programme Secretary before inviting guests.

Item 7 – Acceptance of the Revised Constitution: The Council had reviewed the Society's Constitution to reflect modern conditions and a recommended version was presented to the meeting. On a suggestion from the floor it was decided that a further amendment should be included to state that 40 members would be required to call a Special General Meeting, and with this provision the recommended version was accepted; a copy is attached. Proposer: Arthur Jennion. Seconder: Dick Clague. Accepted: Nem Con.

Item 8 – Election of Council Members: The appointment of Elfyn Hughes as Chairman was confirmed, and Ian Duckett, Tony Melling, Bill Ogle and Ted Scaplehorn were elected/re-elected to the Council. Proposer: Tony Muncer. Seconder: Tony Barratt. Agreed: Nem Con.

Item 9 – Any Other Business: There was no other business.

Item 10 – Date of Next Annual General Meeting: The next Annual General Meeting of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society will be held on Thursday 21 May 2020 at The Athenaeum, Liverpool.

E J Scaplehorn, Secretary

The Liverpool Nautical Research Society
Accounts for the Full Year 2018/2019 held at Santander Bank PLC
Opening Bank Balances: Current Account, £3299 Deposit Account, £4592, Total £7994

Income		2018/19	2017/18
	Subscriptions	3608	4465
	Donations	403	1172
	Refreshments	196	140
	Book Sales	166	50
	Merchandise Sales	319	77
	Deposit Interest	18	15
	Total	4710	5919
Expenditure			
	Bulletin Printing	2041	1278
	Distribution/ Stationery	95	
	Room Hire	684	680
	Speaker Expenses	456	316
	Refreshments	239	235
	Development Costs	1108	699
	Hon. Treasurer Expenses	158	47
	Hon. Secretary Expenses	125	
	Merchandise	970	260
	Donations/Gifts	157	
	Bulletin Postage	565	830
	Other Postage	14	
	Pastoral	88	
	Bank Charges	10	20
	Total	6710	4365
	Surplus/Deficit during Year	-2000	1554
	Opening Cash Balance	7994	6440
	Closing Cash Balance	5994	7994

Closing Bank Balances: Current Account: £1384 Deposit Account £4610 Total = £5994

Nominated Auditors: Mr F. Molloy Mr J. Olin

1 CONSTITUTION
OF THE
LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY
(May 2019)

2 THE AIMS OF THE SOCIETY ARE:-

(1) To preserve and promote interest in the history of shipping and all nautical subjects through research using the resources of the Merseyside Maritime Museum Archives and Library and other appropriate organisations.
(2) To undertake historical surveys of ships, their builders, owners, masters, crews and other nautical technical matters, particularly of local interest.
(3) To disseminate such information by publication in 'The Bulletin', web site and Society lecture presentations.
(4) To assist in a practical way, projects of the Merseyside Maritime Museum Archive and to offer advice and research to any organisations with nautical interests.
(5) To offer in every suitable way, where possible without charge, assistance with appropriate enquiries that are received from the general public and outside bodies.

3 COUNCIL

The Society shall be managed by a committee (the Council) who are appointed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Society and consist of up to ten members comprising Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and such others as Council considers necessary.

4 CARRYING OUT THE AIMS

In order to carry out the Society's aims, Council has the power to:
(1) Raise funds including by way of an annual subscription, receive grants and donations and effectively use same to carry out the work of the society.
(2) Co-operate with and support other Societies with similar purposes
(3) Do anything which is lawful and necessary to achieve the aims

5 MEMBERSHIP

The Society shall have a membership. All who support the work of the Society and are aged 18 or over can apply to the Secretary to become a member. An accurate, up-to-date membership list will be maintained. The Council may

remove a person's membership if they believe it is in the best interests of the society. That member has the right to be heard by the Council before the decision is made and can be accompanied by a friend.

6 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - AGM

(1) The AGM shall be held annually, with at least one month's notice given to all members by way of the web site and Bulletin. Minutes must be kept of the AGM.

(2) There must be at least ten members present at the AGM.

(3) Every member has one vote. All decisions require a simple majority.

(4) The Council shall present the annual report and verified accounts.

(5) Any member may stand for election to Council by written application to the Secretary no later than fourteen days prior to the AGM, provided that the nominee has signified his or her readiness to serve. If the number of nominees exceeds the number of vacancies, a ballot of members present will be arranged.

(6) Members will confirm the position of Chair of Council, and biennially will elect a Vice-Chair who will serve for one year and subsequently become Chair of Council for a further two years followed by one year as Vice-Chair.

(7) Members shall then elect up to eight further members to Council to serve for the next year. They will retire at the next AGM but may stand for re-election.

(8) Any proposed change to the annual subscription for the ensuing year shall be agreed upon at the Annual General Meeting of the Society.

(9) At all Annual or Special General Meetings of the Society, or of the Council, in the absence of the Chairman, by prior arrangement, the Chair shall be taken by the Vice-Chairman, or in their absence, by another member of the Council, by agreement of the members present.

7 COUNCIL MEETINGS

(1) Council shall hold at least four meetings per year. At their first meeting after the AGM they will elect a treasurer and secretary and remaining officers. Council will act by majority decision. In the event of a tie the Chair will have a second, casting vote

(2) At least 50% (rounded up) of members must be present at the meeting to be able to take decisions. Minutes shall be kept for every meeting.

(3) The Financial Year of the Society shall run from 1st April to 31st March. Subscriptions are due on 1st April and must be paid no later than 1st June. The Treasurer shall report at the next scheduled Council Meeting the names of any members whose subscriptions have lapsed. The Council shall have the power to set the appropriate rate for any special publications of the Society. If members have a conflict of interest they must declare it and leave the meeting while this matter is being discussed or decided.

(4) During the year, Council may appoint up to 2 additional co-opted members (within the maximum of ten), who will carry full voting rights. They will stand down at the next AGM. The Council may appoint ad-hoc subcommittees as required. These shall report their findings to the next convenient Council Meeting and shall cease to function as soon as the assignment is completed.

(5) Council may select and appoint members to the positions of Honorary Member, either short term or permanent, and as President or Vice President as appropriate. When the President or Vice President attends Council they do not have full voting rights.

(6) Council may make reasonable additional rules to help run the society. These rules must not conflict with this constitution or the law.

8 MONEY AND PROPERTY

(1) Money and property must only be used for the Society's purposes, subject to Council approval.

(2) Accurate accounts must be kept. The most recent annual accounts can be seen by society members at the AGM or on request.

(3) Council members cannot receive any money or property from the society, except to cover the cost of reasonable out of pocket expenses.

(4) Money must be held in the Society's bank accounts. All bank security requirements must be observed.

9 GENERAL MEETINGS

If the Council considers it necessary to change the Constitution, other than at an Annual General Meeting, or wind up the Society, they must call a Special General Meeting so that the membership can approve the action. Council must also call a Special General Meeting if they receive a written request from at least forty paid up members. All members must be given at least 14 days notice

and be told the reason for the meeting. All decisions require a two thirds majority. Minutes must be kept.

(1) Winding up - any money or property remaining after payment of debts must be given to an organisation with similar purposes to the Society

(2) Changes to the Constitution - can be made at at Annual General Meetings or Special general Meetings

(3) Council may also call a Special General Meeting to consult the membership on other matters

The Winter's Sale

By the late L.N.R.S Vice President Captain Graeme Cubbin
(First published in September 2003)

A sad sale's best for winter.
I have one of models and paintings.
(With apologies to William Shakespeare.)

There is something about the word "Sale" that arouses the acquisitive streak in all of us, whether it be a Closing Down Sale in the local High Street, or a Car Boot Sale in a farmer's field. But this was a Closing Down Sale with a difference. The official Catalogue, when it came out in December, was mouth-watering in its appeal. Published by Bonhams, the London auctioneers, it announced the Sale of the Harrison Line Collection due to take place at their New Bond Street Showrooms on Tuesday, 21st January 2003. There followed page after page of illustrations in glossy colour of ship models, paintings, brass bells and nautical instruments, all designed to stiffen the resolve of the most timid bidder.

The Harrison Line of Liverpool had finally ceased trading in October 2000. The process of disintegration had been gradual but remorseless, with offices and agencies closing down all over the country, and overseas. Precious artefacts which had graced those premises for many years - ship models, and paintings by distinguished artists - had been jealously guarded, collected, and transported to Mersey Chambers, Harrison's Liverpool headquarters, for safekeeping. But that building was soon to be put up for sale, and in November 2002 the place was evacuated. Meanwhile, the removal men had moved in and stripped it bare. A team from Bonhams had collected all items of value and transported them to London, destined for sale by auction, while

another team from the Merseyside Maritime Museum had assembled all records, photographs, and archive material, stowed the lot in about 130 boxes, and delivered them to the Archive and Library store at the Albert Dock.

It did not take long for Captain Mike Jones and I to decide that, come what may, we would be at that London Sale, if only to ensure that the familiar tokens and totems of our years of employment with Thos. & Jas. Harrison went to good homes. We boarded a mid-morning train from Liverpool on the Monday, arriving at Euston in good time to nip over to Bonhams for a preview.

It was probably the first and only time that anyone had ever seen all the paintings and models displayed in one place, and the sight was impressive. Rows of paintings lined the walls; ranks of models in glass cases covered all available floor space. It was a Harrison Line moment of sunset glory, better seen than described.

We took the opportunity to register officially as bidders, then travelled across town to Charing Cross Station to entrain for Wadhurst, where old friends had kindly offered us a night's lodging.

Next morning, we were up betimes, and, accompanied by our host, returned to Bonhams to find the place seething with humanity. Attendance had far exceeded our auctioneers' expectations, and the start of the sale was delayed while they adapted another room with a video link for the overflow. Everyone was in high good humour, and old friends greeted each other with acclaim. I was utterly bewildered by the stream of venerable seafarers who were eager to re-introduce themselves, having sailed with me in some ship or other some 30 or 50 years ago! And this, the ultimate sale of Harrison Line treasures had brought us all together!

The bidding, once started, was, as they say, brisk. Lot after lot came under the hammer, and prices escalated rapidly, taking those modest items which I fancied soon out of reach. The fleet of 34 models went first, fetching some 2 to 3 times the reserve price. Lot 9, a Builder's model to scale 1:96 of MV Interpreter (1948), reserved at £3,000, went to its new owner on a bid of £9,200! After the models came a stream of brass bells, clocks, and nautical instruments. One elderly bidder, whose father had been master of the SS Novelist during the War, would have liked Lot 6, a model of that ship (which fetched £6,200). But it was too big for his north London flat, so he was determined at least to claim the ship's wheelhouse bell, with its elaborate sennit-worked lanyard. His determination boosted the price to £900 - three times its reserve - but he was delighted with his success! In fact, he was typical of the majority of bidders; most of whom had a personal or family connection with the firm, and dearly wanted a souvenir while memories of those bygone days were still fresh.

Next under the hammer was the picture collection. This included ship-portraits by the 19th Century masters, Joseph Heard, the Walters, and W .K.McMinn. However, some of these did not attain their five figure reserve price, and were withdrawn to

fight another day. However, paintings by modern artists- Colin Verity, Robert Lloyd, John Stobart, Arthur Burgess and Gordon Ellis - were in great demand, and in most cases achieved three or four times their reserve price. Lot 203, a nostalgic composition by John Stobart of MV **Governor** (1952) anchored in Carlisle Bay, Barbados, realised £7,500 - more than ten times its reserve price!

And so the day wore on. Lunch was tacitly ignored while the 230 or so lots (of which only eight were withdrawn) were steadily disposed of, reaching a total of over £460,000 (of which some £80,000 would be shared between the auction house and the Treasury). Weird and wonderful were some of the bids: £120 for a clutch of washer-like dockers' tokens strung on a strand of old baling wire; a sea-ravaged panel from a case of Scotch whisky salvaged from the wreck of the ill fated SS **Politician** - mounted in a frame, it is true - was sold for £1,300; while a faded receipt issued by the commander of the **Graf Spee** to the master of the **Huntsman** for his ship before it was looted and sunk, fetched £950. But these items meant something to the purchasers. Their links with history were profound or personal, and doubtless they would in time acquire the status of family heirlooms, perhaps destined to tease the curiosity of viewers of some distant Antiques Roadshow.

Of course, it soon became apparent that observers (like me) had to exercise care, and sit rigidly in our seats, as the slightest gesture, or least fleeting eye contact could raise the bidding by several hundred pounds! It was a hazardous place to be in that respect. Successful bidders, too, had to be sure they had the necessary funds available, for, having congratulated themselves on the success of their bids, they would then find as much as 25 - 35% added to their bill to cover VAT and the auctioneer's commission!

The Sale excited comment from local and national press correspondents.:-

For example, Clare Stewart, in THE TIMES:

> "Anyone nostalgic for the days when Britain ruled the sea-lanes will be interested in the unique archive of the Harrison Line, one of Britain's oldest shipping lines. They [the models] are a microcosm of British shipping history, ranging from coasters to container-liners"

Anne Crane, in the ANTIQUES TRADE GAZETTE:

> "A slice of Liverpool's celebrated maritime history was under the hammer ... people who had worked for, or were associated with the Company, turned out in force to buy a memento ... many coming from Merseyside and the North"

Chris Proudlove, in the LIVERPOOL DAILY POST:

"... any [painting]. .. in the Harrison Line Collection ... would do [me] nicely ... but with champagne taste and beer pocket money, most are out of my reach. But again ... I'm sorely tempted ... "

Emma Johnson, in the LIVERPOOL ECHO:

"It is no surprise that the auction raised such an interest - the history of the line is a fascinating one."

Thus the Company's treasures, amassed over a period of 170 years, came to be dispersed throughout the land, and possibly overseas. Fortunately for the peace of mind of future maritime historians, the Company's records and archives, as noted above, were collected en masse by a team from the Merseyside Maritime Museum's Archives and Library Department, to be kept in perpetuity by that organisation for the enlightenment and instruction of future generations of students of maritime history. For it is all there:- Vessels' voyages and Movement Books; performance of machinery and fuel consumption; details of Deck and Engineer Officers' careers; personal accident and sickness reports; stevedores' records of cargoes loaded and unloaded; detailed cargo plans; leatherbound accounts ledgers and minute books; summaries of case law; casualty and disaster files; ships' plans and profiles, many hand drawn in leather-bound tomes; trade statistics; insurance claims; diaries and shipmasters' reports; crew lists and wage structures - even a dreaded "Black Book" of misdemeanours; and photographs - literally hundreds of photographs, loose and in albums.

*A typical example of a Harrison painting, this is the **Inanda** (1925), 5,985 grt., built by Swan Hunter & Wigham Richardson. Sunk in London docks in 1940 she was raised, re-named **Empire Explorer**; but lost in 1942*

Dawn Littler, the Museum's Archivist, quoted in the LIVERPOOL ECHO, says: "... this is a great opportunity for us, and it is very kind of [the Company] to donate this archive intact. Harrison's was a very well loved company in Liverpool, and I think there will be a lot of interest in this archive. Shipping historians will be keen to see these artefacts, as will people, who worked for the Line, and their relatives. It completes our collection [of Liverpool Shipping Company records]. It is a very good collection ... and it is now that the work really begins."

The task of classifying and cataloguing the Collection with the Department's customary attention to detail, would, it was estimated, take about two years. However, it is hugely satisfying to know that these unique documents are now in safe and caring hands, and that the history of a famous old family shipping company will not be lost to posterity

Saga of m.t. **San Demetrio** - Part One

By LNRS member Gordon Bodey

This article is a revised and amended version of that published in the June, 2001 *Bulletin*. It has been compiled largely from contemporary accounts and reports of the events, and a transcript of the proceedings in the Admiralty Division of the High Court, 16th & 17th January, 1941, in a claim for salvage of the **San Demetrio** brought by second officer, Mr. A.G. Hawkins, and 15 crew members.

The heroism, courage and resourcefulness shown by the men involved, in the face of unimaginable adversity and mortal danger, epitomised the spirit of the seafarers of the Royal Navy and Merchant Navy throughout the conflict of WWII, and surely ranks as one of the great sagas of the sea.

San Demetrio: Official No. 166623, Call Sign GKKW was built in 1938 for the Eagle Oil & Shipping Company of London by Blytheswood Shipbuilding Co. at Glasgow, she was a tanker of 8,073 GRT, 4,815 NRT; length 463.2 ft, breadth 61.2 ft & depth 33.1 ft. Her service speed was 12 knots, and her normal complement was 42.

In October 1940, **San Demetrio**, under the command of Captain George Waite, was on route from Aruba in the West Indies to the Clyde via Halifax, N.S., carrying 11,200 tons of high-octane petrol. After a week's delay at Halifax due to a very active enemy submarine presence in the region, **San Demetrio** sailed in convoy HX84 for the Clyde on Monday, 28th October, 1940.

The convoy consisted of 38 vessels of some 228,000 GRT. The ships were from at least eight nations, with 23 of them being British - nine of which were oil tankers. The convoy had one escort - the armed merchant cruiser HMS ***J*ervis Bay**, under the command of Captain E.F.S. Fegen, RN, which was equipped with a number of six-inch calibre guns, and had a speed of 15 knots.

On Friday, November 1st at about 10.00, **San Demetrio** was forced to drop out of the convoy when a fault developed in one of her main engine cylinders. She

remained stopped for sixteen hours. At 02.00 the following morning, the fault remedied, her engines were restarted and she set off in pursuit of the convoy, which was re-sighted on Tuesday, 5th November. The day was clear and sunny with a light south-westerly breeze.

Just after 17.00 hours local time on that day, at position 52º26' N, 32º34' W (about 1,000 miles east of Newfoundland), the look-out on the **San Demetrio**, which had taken up station at the head of the port column of the convoy, sighted a large ship looming over the horizon bearing 30^0 on the port bow, and at an estimated distance of seven to ten miles. **Jervis Bay**, leading the column to starboard of **San Demetrio**'s, had also seen the intruder and, with two blasts of her whistle, cut across **San Demtrios**'s bow to investigate.

Some minutes later a loud explosion was heard, first thought to be a depth charge dropped by **Jervis Bay**. This was followed soon afterwards by a signal hoisted on the commodore ship **Cornish City** (Reardon, Smith & Co., Cardiff) for the convoy to turn to starboard; almost immediately, a second signal ordered the convoy to scatter. The convoy commodore aboard **Cornish City** was Rear-Admiral H.B. Maltby (retd.). The approaching vessel was the German heavy cruiser **Admiral Scheer**, formerly classed as a pocket battleship, and the explosion heard was her first salvo being fired.

The pocket battleships were so called because they mounted a main armament of six 11-inch calibre guns as opposed to the so-called 'Washington' cruisers' 8-inch calibre main armament guns. Three such vessels were built of which **Admiral Scheer**, with a displacement of 12,100 tons, was the second. She was one of the first German navy's big ships to be diesel powered, and had a range of 9,000 miles at 25 knots. She was also to become the most successful of the German surface raiders. The very similar **Admiral Graf Spee** had been, after the attentions of the Royal Navy, ignominiously scuttled outside Montevideo harbour on 17th December, 1939.

Admiral Scheer had passed through the Kiel Canal from the Baltic on 27th October, 1940 and, evading detection, passed westward through the Denmark Strait on 31st October. Her first target was the independently-routed Elder & Fyffe's **Mopan**, encountered on 5th November at 52^0 48'N, 32^0 15'W. The **Mopan** was carrying 1,500 tons of bananas and bound for Garston on the Mersey. She was obliged to surrender when challenged by the **Admiral Scheer** and her crew of 68 was taken prisoner. She was then sunk by gunfire. **Mopan**, however, and for whatever reason, had failed to pass on the information when **Admiral Scheer** had first appeared, and Convoy HX84 was fated to be the raider's first major target.

Within half an hour of the raider's first sighting by the convoy, **Jervis Bay** had engaged her (but at her guns' maximum range) and was at the same time trying to

close the distance between them, and draw the raider's fire, which she did with devastating effect to herself.

Almost at the start of the action, **Jervis Bay** was struck heavily amidships below the waterline. Her main bridge was severely damaged by another shell, which also resulted in Captain Fegen suffering severe injuries including having one of his arms blown off. The ship's main steering gear having been put out of action, Captain Fegen, despite the severity of his injuries, then went aft to fight the ship from the conning bridge there, but within minutes it too was struck. An explosion was seen to occur aft causing a fire, and was thought to be due to a magazine exploding. Though mortally wounded, Captain Fegen immediately returned to the main bridge but was not seen thereafter. When **Jervis Bay**'s colours were shot away a seaman rapidly clambered aloft to fasten another ensign to the rigging.

By now, one of **Jervis Bay**'s holds was filling from the hole below the waterline and she was listing to port. Keeping up as much fire as possible on the **Admiral Schee**r, and though now ablaze from stem to stern, and sinking by the stern, **Jervis Bay** held on toward the target and saved one final salvo until well within range of it. Immediately after leasing it, from broadside on, the order was given to abandon ship, and within minutes **Jervis Bay** had sunk. This occurred about 30 minutes after the action had commenced. For his outstanding valour Captain Fegen was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

Captain Sven Olander of the Swedish cargo vessel **Stureholm**, who had initially tried to put distance between his ship and the raider, was so impressed by the scene being enacted that he felt compelled to return to the sphere of action, despite the obvious peril in doing so, to rescue any survivors to be found. As a result of his great courage, 65 survivors from **Jervis Bay** - most of them on life-rafts - were taken aboard without mishap, and subsequently landed in Newfoundland. It was later reported by the survivors that the raider had targeted the life-rafts and lifeboats with a hail of shrapnel.

*mt **San Demetrio** pictured pre-war*

The outstanding heroism of **Jervis Bay**'s crew had bought very precious time for the now defenceless convoy. It may also be conjectured that her guns had inflicted some vital, albeit repairable, damage on the **Admiral Scheer** in view of the latter's subsequent course of action when she had the whole convoy at her mercy. A number of targets were, however, still within the range

of her guns - among them **San Demetrio**, which lay between the raider and a horizon now lit by a rising full moon in a clear sky.

The first shell to strike the **San Demetrio** hit her on the port bow killing a young ordinary seaman, Ernest Daines, on look-out on the fo'c'sle head. This was immediately followed by a shell which struck amidships above the waterline. Captain Waite, in accordance with a pre-arrangement with the ship's engineers, had rung down to the engine-room '*finished with engines*' immediately the first shell had struck. This was also the signal to abandon ship. A third shell followed close on the second, striking aft on the poop. The whole mid-ships section, above deck, and the poop were now ablaze.

Initially, two lifeboats got away: one commanded by the Chief Officer, Mr Wilson, and the other by the Second Officer, Mr. Hawkins. The latter boat containing nine men, as it was about to pull away, was hailed from the rail and seven more men (among them Callum Macneil) managed to scramble down to the boat; these additional hands were to prove vital. It was this boat's crew that was to turn the initial disaster into a saga of courage in the face of mortal danger, and of fortitude and ingenuity in the face of unremitting hardship over the following ten days. Captain Waite, at this time, had not left his ship.

In the course of descending into the lifeboat, John Davies (storekeeper) and John Boyle (engine-room greaser) both fell and were badly injured.

The scene was now not only illuminated by the full moon, but luridly lit by the flames of two other burning ships, and burning fuel oil spreading over the sea (no other tanker had been struck). The crew of **San Demetrio**, knowing that their Nemesis was at their elbows, pulled their boats away as rapidly as possible fearing the inevitable. In the process, the crew of that commanded by Mr Hawkins (the actual sailing master of the boat was Callum Macneil, A.B., from the isle of Barra, an extremely experienced and skillful boatman whose skills were critical for the safety of those in the boat) narrowly escaped being captured by the raider, which was now almost upon them. The **Admiral Scheer**, fanning the water with her searchlights, stopped and ordered another lifeboat to draw alongside and its crew was taken on board. The crew of the **San Demetrio**'s boat had stopped rowing believing that they would be the next to be ordered aboard but, fortuitously, they were not seen and the raider made off at high speed. In all, the action had lasted some two hours.

The sudden departure of the **Admiral Scheer** when on the verge of a major triumph in her role as a destroyer of merchant ships raises two questions:

- Had **Jervis Bay** inflicted some debilitating, temporary damage, necessitating an early retirement from the scene of action? Or,

- Did **Admiral Scheer**'s commander fear the approach of British naval units of equal or greater strength? The standing order for these raiders was to avoid such engagements.

Whatever the reason she failed to fulfil her *raison d'etre.* Had she lurked below the horizon to the west of the convoy until dawn, none of the ships therein would have been sure of survival. In the event only six of the ships were lost.

By later that night a north-westerly gale had set in and continued into the following day, causing severe discomfort from seasickness to all the lifeboat's occupants. It was also raining heavily and was bitterly cold. The lifeboat lay to a sea anchor (a makeshift device attached to a line and veered over the bow and allowed to trail in order to hold the boat's bow into the sea in heavy weather) with the crew at the oars throughout the night and Callum Macneill at the tiller.

Dawn came with great seas still running, but hopes of relief were temporarily raised in the forenoon when a ship was sighted through the troughs; the lifeboat, despite lighting flares, was not seen. Late that afternoon another vessel was sighted, which appeared to be stopped in the water and on fire. When within hailing distance she was recognised, to great astonishment, as the abandoned **San Demetrio**. The sea about her reeked of petrol. After setting the sea anchor at a safe distance, and on **San Demetrio**'s weather side, the boat's crew argued at length throughout that night whether or not to re-board her. At dawn she was found to have drifted away during the night, but still visible about five miles off.

Having now decided that there was a very faint hope of survival back aboard, but with a quick hot death should the worst happen; and this option being preferable to a cold, lingering demise with no hope, the lifeboat's crew set a small sail and came up with her about noon (on Thursday, 7th November), still burning and pouring smoke.

This time, getting to leeward, the boat's crew, after putting the boat's blankets over the gunwales to prevent striking a spark and igniting the petrol vapour hanging over the water, got back aboard the ship by means of the same rope ladder, still hanging over the starboard quarter, as was used to leave her. It was a formidable task however for men soaked to the skin in icy conditions and suffering from exposure, and weakness from hunger and debilitation caused by constant sea-sickness, to climb 25ft. up a rope ladder with the ship heaving up and down, and the lifeboat in imminent danger of being smashed against its side in the heavy seas; especially so for the injured men.

All having done so, they then tried to retrieve the lifeboat, but it was lost; retrieving it, however, would have been irrelevant had the worst happened. At this distance in time, and to people unaware of the indescribable fear and privation entailed in being adrift in the north Atlantic in winter in gale-force winds in a small boat, such an act may seem to have been one of collective lunacy, especially as they

did not know if the fires could be extinguished, or the engine was still operable. But to men in such dire straits any straw was worth clutching.

On board, they found, in addition to the fires still burning, a scene of great devastation, which included the whole of the midships and poop section gutted by fire. Another shell having struck the bridge, everything to do with navigation and signalling had been destroyed; the forehold was flooded as a result of the collision bulkhead being pierced by the exploding shell that struck the port bow, causing her head to be down in the water, and her propeller partly out of the water; the deck was punctured with numerous shrapnel holes from which petrol spurted and washed across the deck each time she rolled in the continuing heavy seas; the steward's stores and fresh water tanks amidships were gone, but luckily two fresh water tanks aft were intact. In the engine-room the water was three feet deep around the engineer's platform, and all the fuel units were under water. Additionally, steam and exhaust lines as well as electric cabling had been seriously damaged. However, there was good news: the cooling and lubricating systems, and the main engine were undamaged; and a quantity of undamaged potatoes and onions, as well as eight loaves, some cans of condensed milk and some tea had been found.

The first, and immediate, priority, was to extinguish the fire burning amidships directly above No.7 port tank. To this end the engine-room staff worked unceasingly to get a Paxman generator (usually used to power the de-gaussing system when in mined inshore waters) into working order so that the fuel-oil pump could be operated and thereby fire a boiler to generate steam pressure and enable the ballast pump to be operated. This was achieved a little after dark, but it was then found that some cabling had been destroyed preventing the pump from working. The cabling breaks were repaired enabling an auxiliary boiler, which had not completely cooled, to be fired up quickly to obtain a steam pressure of c.70 lbs. It must be mentioned here that in addition to John Boyle and John Davies having been injured, George Willey, the 3rd engineer was suffering frostbite in both feet, and the Chief Engineer, Charles Pollard, had a damaged hand, sustained when boarding the lifeboat, and now badly swollen due to an infection in it. Nevertheless, all worked tirelessly putting things into some sort of working order.

While the engineers toiled below, everyone else was fighting to extinguish the main fire on deck using a bucket chain with water gathered from the sea, and were greatly relieved when the fire hoses, attached to a line coupled to the ballast pump, became operational. After some hours the fire was finally put out, with, it was thought, little time to spare.

Another major fire was in the foot-thick cork insulation, encased in cement and sheathed with steel plate (and in the contents) of the meat storage unit aft. This fire

was kept damped down until the following day when daylight allowed the casing to be hacked away and the fire extinguished.

The out-flowing petrol had now to be staunched. This was accomplished tolerably well, but not wholly satisfactorily, with wooden pegs wrapped in cotton waste. This task was undertaken by all hands without other tasks, including the irrepressible American A.B., Oswald Preston, who had signed on in Halifax as a Canadian with the intention of getting to the UK to join up. He had gone over the side with a line around his waist to try to bail out the lifeboat - unsuccessfully - when they had re-boarded. He seemed to take delight in being up to his neck in water at times when hammering home the plugs.

To be concluded in our next edition.

Was James McGinley the originator of the Liverpool Palm?

by Des Pawson MBE

The palm is the quintessential tool of the sailmaker. It is needed to push the heavy needle through the various layers of canvas that go to make the seams and detailed strengthening parts of the sail. A sailmaker might wear his palm all day, every day, sewing many miles in a career. Many sailing ships would carry a sailmaker as a member of the crew, but sailors would be called to help 'sails' repair and even make new sails from scratch. They too would need a palm. From simple beginnings these tools have evolved into two main types: firstly, the seaming palm, for sewing the

Liverpool Pattern Seaming Palm made by James McGinley, Liverpool at the Creetown Heritage Centre, Photo Des Pawson.

seams, whose iron has small indentations; secondly, the roping palm, which has larger indentations on the iron and the leather is raised round the thumb, where a turn of the twine is often taken to get an extra pull to tighten the stitches. Roping (sewing

the rope round the outside of the sail) takes a larger needle with thicker twine and is heavier work altogether, lighter and cheaper palms are usually sold as ‘sailor’s palms’.

There are many styles and variations within these categories, built up with various layers of leather and rawhide, and different qualities and styles of irons, with different areas of the world developing their own distinct styles.

The main British centre for the making of sail needles and sailmakers palms has, since the 1820s, has been Redditch and its surrounding area including Studley and Alcester just south of Birmingham. Indeed this was probably the world centre for this trade. These makers make a very wide range of styles of palms some makers having up to 30 different styles, not counting the offer of left or right handed palms. One style that many makers offered in both a Seaming & Roping version is a Liverpool pattern palm. These were usually designated Sailors Palms, being not as heavy as the sailmakers palms. One such company, founded there in 1840, and still based in Redditch, is John James & Co. This example (Pattern Number 115 - Liverpool double roping, tied) from their 1936 catalogue.

No. 3 One-piece half lined leather seaming palm

No. 4 Riveted joint leather seaming palm, half lined around thimble.

No. 5 Adjustable leather seaming palm, half-lined around thimble.

No. 6 Adjustable leather roping palm, half lined around thimble

A visit to the Creetown Heritage Centre, Galloway in southwest Scotland let me inspect a palm on display. It was a “Liverpool pattern” Seaming Palm and most importantly it had clearly stamped J. McGINLEY LIVERPOOL.

The 1851 census lists James McGinley of 80 Bridgewater Street Liverpool as a Palm Manufacturer aged 38, born in Ireland (about 1813). The 1853 edition of Gores Directory of Liverpool and its environs list him as Outfitter & Palm manufacturer at 80 Bridgewater Street, he being entered in the trade section under Taylors & Drapers, yet the 1860 Gores gives him purely as a Palm Manufacturer, but with no trade entry. The 1861 census has him again as Palm Maker at 80 Bridgewater Street by now with a wife Ann. Still at 80 Bridgewater Street the 1871 census but now the entry appears as perhaps Sail Tool Manuf. then in pale text, sailmaker. This confusion, as to exactly what trade was carried out, has arisen with other entries for sailmakers palm makers in London. It is likely that one of the two James McGinleys' who died in Liverpool in the second half of 1879 was James McGinley Palm Maker of Liverpool who could be considered the likely originator of the "Liverpool Pattern" of Sailors Palm.

These Liverpool Pattern palms are from the catalogue of William Smith & Son, Redditch, c 1980

When Seamen became Stockmen

by Captain A. N. Collop
submitted by L.N.R.S. Member David White

Tony Collop was an apprentice deck officer in the Merchant Navy in the 1950s and served on many of the ships transporting livestock around the world. It had its humorous moments, he remembers. He now lives in retirement in the South of France.

Cows, sheep, prize rams, pigs, dogs and cats. I have carried them all as cargo on various ships. They had to be looked after rather more carefully than, say, machine tools, fed and watered at inconvenient intervals, but basically, they were freight exported from one country to another.

Back in the 1950s there were no specialised ships to carry them so we built their pens on deck on a one-off basis. Specialists were not employed to look after them, no cattlemen, just us. As apprentice officers we were usually given the job of feeding, watering and mucking them out. If they calved, which they often did, the Second Mate or Chief Steward was the midwife, with our rather shaky assistance.

My first experience was in 1951, shortly after joining my first ship, **Egyptian Prince.** We took ten heifers from London to Malta. Everything was fine until the Bay of Biscay, when we encountered one of the worst storms of the century. The cow

pens, specially built of wood, kept getting damaged by heavy seas and were in danger of being washed away completely. We spent day after day roped together, often up to our waists in water, rebuilding and shoring the pens up. The ship arrived at Malta five days overdue on a trip which usually only lasted ten days, Because of this, the Maltese authorities refused permission for the cows to be disembarked as their foot and mouth disease immunity papers had expired. So, we were stuck with them. We discharged the rest of our cargo in Malta and backloaded British Army stores for discharge at Port Said. After Port Said, we part-loaded cotton at Alexandria and then on to Cyprus to load potatoes for the UK.

The first calf was born between Malta and Port Said, without any assistance from us. He escaped from his pen and was found on deck. Since we did not know which gave birth to him, we offered the calf up to each of them in turn. If they kicked out at him, we considered this a rejection and kept on trying until one of the cows accepted him. Two more were born after that, but the Second Mate got to them in time and supervised their delivery. They were finally discharged at Famagusta. Ten animals had left London for Malta and thirteen were gratefully received at Cyprus, papers or no papers.

The next occasion was something of an epic. It happened two years into my apprenticeship when I was sailing on an old tramp steamer, **Brazilian Prince**. We were on a voyage from New Zealand and Australia to Mauritius and all the ports in South and East Africa from Cape Town up to Mombasa. In Adelaide we loaded fifteen cows for eventual delivery to Mombasa. A few days later, at Fremantle, we loaded five prize rams for Durban and 200 sheep for Mauritius. The sheep were going to be slaughtered on arrival, being part of the island's meat supply for the month. We also loaded a deck cargo of apples on the forward hatches and onions on the after hatches.

The sheep were shorn on the dockside before being loaded. My aunt, who happened to be living in Perth at that time, came down to visit me on the ship. She took one look at the cows loaded in Adelaide and said that they were going to calve soon. "Oh no they won't" said the Captain, who was passing by. "I've been assured by the shippers that these cows are not in calf." "Oh yes they are" replied my aunt, "and it's not going to be very long either." She was right, of course, Aunts usually are! The five prize rams were magnificent creatures with beautiful white fleeces which were left unshorn. The apples belonged to someone's granny and the onions stank. People said that they could smell the ship a couple of miles off.

Our first port after Fremantle was Mauritius, where we were due to offload the sheep, apples and onions. We arrived there too late in the evening to enter Port Louis so we remained at sea, drifting and waiting for sunrise. The Captain and Chief Officer decided to shift all the sheep from the after deck to the fore deck, clean up the mess they had been making for the past three weeks and then herd them back aft to their

pens, all 200 of them and before the pilot boarded at 6am. We two apprentices with the Bosun and Carpenter were going to carry out the operation, while the Old Man and the Mate were on call to give advice if necessary.

"How are we going to get the sheep up forward?" I asked. "Oh, just find the Judas sheep and he'll do the job for you" replied the Mate as he and the Old Man retired to their cabin for a quiet drink. We went over and looked at the sheep and two hundred of them gazed solemnly back at us. "Which one's the Judas?" asked the Bosun. None of them showed any sign of wanting to betray their mates.

Dredging deep into my memory seemed to recall that Judas sheep were sometimes called bellwethers. "It'll have a bell around its neck" I said, "to attract the other sheep." "In that case, the bloody thing would have been ringing the last three weeks" stated the Bosun. None of them had a bell. The crafty Aussie herders had probably taken it back after the sheep had done its job, saving the bell for the next consignment.

We got most of the sheep from the after deck, through the alleyways on to the fore deck. About twenty of them found the entrance to the engineers' accommodation, which door we had forgotten to shut. The Fourth Engineer woke up to find his cabin a sea of sheep. He could have walked to his cabin door on them. After we shooed them out, he was left with a wall to wall carpet of good manure.

Eventually, we got all the sheep forward, swept up their mess, pitchforked it all overboard and washed the deck down. Then we had difficulty getting the sheep back aft again. We got them as far as the deck area between the bridge and the engineers' accommodation when we saw the Bosun causing a bottleneck. I climbed up to the next deck on the bridge housing to see what would happen next. The Captain saw me there and told me to stop messing about and jump down on top of the sheep. To this day I don't know if he was serious or not but I jumped. I landed on the backs of several sheep and set off a stampede. They charged the Bosun and carried him down aft on their backs. In fact, he ended up in the pens with sheep. I was left midships, sprawled out on the deck and thoroughly winded.

After Mauritius, the sheep had gone and my aunt's prediction started to come true. Our cows delivered a total of five calves. They were so small they could squeeze out of their mothers' pens. They loved doing this and enjoyed a good run around the decks. Our ship was a flush-deck ship and they used to start running, always down the port side of the after deck, round the stern, up the starboard side, round the foc's'le and down the port side again. Circuit after circuit, faster and faster. If we were painting in the outside midships alleyways we would suddenly hear the thunder of tiny hooves. It was a signal to stop painting, jump up onto the bulwarks with our paint pots until the herd had passed, then jump back down and continue painting until they came around again.

The five prize rams were also still with us. Their white fleeces had turned black from the funnel smoke so the Captain and Chief Officer decided they should be cleaned up a bit. Again, it was us cadets, Bosun and Chippy who did the job. We got some Teepol, mixed it in a bucket with hot water, held the rams down with some difficulty and washed them. Then we hosed them off. The first attempt turned them piebald but it was better the second time.

We received orders to dry-dock in Durban before continuing north. This was a disaster because the cows and calves destined for Mombasa would not be allowed to land in Durban and there was no way they could stay on the ship in dry-dock. They would have to be slaughtered because of the ever-constant fear of foot and mouth disease. The prize rams were due to be offloaded at Durban anyway so their papers were OK. We were quite upset at this turn of events. We had become fond of our animals, especially as we were getting fresh milk every day. However, the shippers in Adelaide and the receivers in Kenya must have protested vehemently, because we eventually did a ship-to-ship transfer in Durban harbour before going alongside. The cows and calves were off-loaded directly on to a different ship and continued their journey to Mombasa without touching the shore at Durban.

We used to like dealing with cows and sheep, not least because we used to get good bonuses for it. We would split the wages which should have been paid to the cattleman between us. I received £45 that voyage, which was good money. My wages then were a miserable £7-10-0 a month and even the Second Mate's salary was only £36. We never lost any of the cows, calves or prize rams, although five of the 200 sheep died on us.

*mv **Egyptian Prince***

*mv **Brazilian Prince***

Launched		27.09.50	
Completed		23.01.51	28.09.44
Type		Steel motor vessel, cargo	Steel steam ship, cargo
Builder		Burntisland Shipbuilding Co	United Shipyards, Quebec, Ca
Tonnage	gross	3,364	2,878
	net	1,574	1,653

Dimensions	length	349 ft	316ft.
	beam	51 ft	46ft
	depth	22 ft	23 ft
Engine		4-cyl. 2 S.C.S.A Doxford 660nhp; 2,310bhp	Triple expansion steam, coal fired, 2,500 bhp

The Steam Whaler **Aurora**

A summary of the talk given to the Society on 16 May, 2019
by LNRS Member W.G. Williamson

***Aurora** breaking through soft ice Wikimedia*

The **Aurora** was built in 1876 by Alexander Stephen & Sons at their Panmure yard in Dundee (yard No 62) as a sealer/whaler for the Dundee fleet. Such ships were extremely strongly built as they were certain, whilst sealing, to spend considerable periods of time locked in the ice. To survive the extreme crushing forced their hull shape enabled them to be pushed upwards by the ice so that, in effect, they 'floated' on the ice surface. The hull was made of oak, sheathed with greenheart and lined with fir. The bow was a mass of solid wood reinforced with steel-plate armour. The heavy side frames were braced by two levels of horizontal oak beams. She was of 580 GRT

From 1876 to 1910 (an impressive 34 years) she operated safely and successfully in this harsh trade, usually making two trips each year. The first around February to the Greenland Sea around Spitzbertgen or Nova Zemlya in search

of whales. The second to St. John's Newfoundland, where she would pick up additional crew to work as sealers, to search off Newfoundland and Labrador. In **Aurora**'s case she would take on an extra 240 local men, known as 'sweilers', who would hunt some 28,000 seals in a season. In March 1877 the Newfoundland Morning Chronicle quoted, "We do not exclude our Dundee friends the fact that Arctic and Aurora are manned by nearly 500 of our men calls for our best wishes respecting them".

The reason they were so welcomed was it soaked up unemployment, "idle and adrift about our streets"

The **Aurora** had already enjoyed a busy and eventful early life before being involved in any kind of Antarctic expedition proving her strength and sea worthiness in the stormy Northern and sub-Arctic seas.

She was purchased by Douglas Mawson in 1910 as his expedition ship for the Australasian Antarctic Expedition and, following extensive modifications which included the addition of three large tanks for storage of fresh water, she sailed under the command of Captain John King Davis. Leaving Hobart on 2nd December 1911 for Macquarie Island where she arrived on 11 December after experiencing very heavy weather. Departing Macquarie on 23rd December **Aurora** soon began exploring the coastal areas of the Antarctic Continent during which 'King George V Land' and 'Queen Mary Land' were discovered and named.

Coastal and inland sledging journeys enabled the teams to explore previously unknown lands. In the second half of 1912, there were five major journeys from the main base to the western base.

Mawson himself was part of a three-man sledging team with Xavier Mertz and Lieutenant B.E.S. Ninnis who headed east on 10 November 1912 to survey King George V Land. On 14 December, after three weeks of excellent progress, the party was crossing the Ninnis Glacier, when Ninnis fell through a snow-covered crevasse. Metz had skied over the crevasse lid, Mawson had been on his sled with his weight dispersed, but Ninnis was jogging beside the second sled and his body weight is likely to have breached the lid. Six dogs, most of the party's rations, their tent and other essential supplies disappeared into a massive crevasse 480km. east of the main base. Metz and Mawson spotted one dead and one injured dog on a ledge 46m. down but Ninnis was never seen again.

Mawson and Xavier Metz turned back immediately. Their scanty provisions forced them to eat their remaining dogs, unwittingly causing a swift deterioration in the men's physical condition. The liver of one dog contains enough vitamin A to produce the condition called Hypervitaminosis A. Metz became incapacitated and incoherent; in an attempt to nurse him back to health, Mawson fed him most of the dog livers, which he considered more nourishing than the tough muscle tissue. After

Metz died, Mawson continued alone for 30 days. He cut his sled in half with a pen knife and dragged the sled with geological specimens but minimal food 160km back to the base camp at Camp Denison. When Mawson finally arrived there on 8 February 1913 the words of his first rescuer were “My God, which one are you?” However this was just hours after Davis’s recovery party had left on the Aurora. The ship was recalled by wireless communication, only to have bad weather thwart the rescue effort. Mawson, and the six men who had remained behind to look for him, wintered a second unplanned year until December 1913.

The **Aurora** did not stay away from Antarctica for long. After a refit in Sydney she was used by Sir Ernest Shackleton in 1914-1916 for transporting and supplying the "Ross Sea Party" for his Trans-Antarctic Expedition. After the refit **Aurora** again left Hobart, under the command of Aeneas Mackintosh, to lay depots inland from the Ross Sea coast, ahead of Shackleton’s team that was to cross from the Weddell Sea. Shackleton’s team never arrived. His ship **Endurance** was trapped in ice in February 1915 and sank that November. In an eerie parallel, **Aurora** too became beset by ice after breaking her moorings in a blizzard in May 1915, marooning the Ross Sea party on the continent and the crew on the ship.

The crew on the ship drifted north at the mercy of the ice, for 1,200 miles and nine months. However, the ‘stout’ **Aurora**, unlike her counterpart **Endurance**, survived and limped to New Zealand in April 1916.

After extensive overhaul, the ship returned to Antarctica in 1917 to rescue the Shackleton and the Ross Sea party. Under the command of former Captain John King Davis, **Aurora** carried the seven survivors to Wellington, in February 1917.

In March Shackleton sold the ship for £10,000 and auctioned her contents. Under new owners New York and Pacific Steam Ship Co, **Aurora** sailed to Newcastle, Australia, to load coal for Chile.

The **Aurora** was last seen in June 1917, leaving Newcastle for Chile with a crew of 21 and a cargo of coal. She disappeared and it is thought she hit a mine laid by a German raider near Wellington New Zealand. This was a sad end to a polar survivor.

On 5 December Aurora’s lifebuoy was plucked from the seas off northern New South Wales by Captain David Petrie of SS **Coombar** on his run from the north coast to Sydney, six months after **Aurora**’s disappearance. The ship’s name and the initials of both the major Antarctic expeditions, Shackleton’s ITAE (Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition) and Mawson’s AAE (Australasian Antarctic Expedition) can be seen in ghosted lettering on its rim.

In the 1930s the lifebuoy was presented to Sir Lionel Hooke, general manager and later chairman of AWA (Amalgamated Wireless Australasia). Sir Lionel had served on **Aurora** as wireless operator on the Ross Sea Party after the new company, his employer AWA, fitted the ship’s wireless. Subsequently John Hooke gifted **Aurora**’s

lifebuoy to Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney, in memory of his late father Sir Lionel Hooke, wireless operator Shackleton's Ross Sea Party 1914-16

Just fancy that ….

A teenage boy had just passed his driving test and inquired of his father as to when they could discuss his use of the car.

His father said he'd make a deal with his son, "You bring your grades up from a C to a B average, study your Bible a little, and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk about the car."

The boy thought about that for a moment, decided, he'd settle for the offer, and they agreed on it.

After about six weeks his father said, "Son, you've brought your grades up and I've observed that you have been studying your Bible, but I'm disappointed you haven't had your hair cut."

The boy said, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Samson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair, and there's even strong evidence that Jesus had long hair."

(You're going to love the Dad's reply!)
"Did you also notice they all walked everywhere they went?"

True!

The Chief is ALWAYS RIGHT!
He may be misinformed, inexact,
bullheaded, fickle, ignorant.
Even abnormally stupid, but NEVER WRONG.

MONDAY MEETINGS

Members meet at the Archives and Library of the
Merseyside Maritime Museum on Mondays as follows:

September	Mondays	2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th
October		7th, 14th, 21st and 28th
November		4th, 11th, 18th and 25th
December		2nd, 9th and 16th

Signing On

"Shipping Office, ten a.m. tomorrow". The word goes around the ship. The purser looks worried as only pursers can look worried. His is a worrying job with income tax, code and pool numbers, and all the other etceteras. The chief officer counts, for the fiftieth time, the number of lifeboat tickets among his crowd. Chief Stewards are always a boy or two shorthanded. And Chief Engineers — who knows what a Chief is thinking?

But ten o'clock next morning puts an end to all thinking. Punctually at a quarter past ten the master and purser arrive with brief cases and papers. It takes ten minutes to gather wits, ink and blotting paper, and another five for a pen with a nib of writeable qualities: then, as an afterthought, a shipping master. You find them in a cubby hole like a civil servant's nest. But you cannot do much without a shipping master, despite the fact that he can do nothing without seamen. These are mere trifles. They are nothing compared with the signing, the act of putting name to paper. For seamen, like film stars, must sign a contract.

If there are seven wonders of the world, surely the eighth is the fact than no matter how many times a man signs on, even the oldest and most experienced errs at signing-on time. He is a bold man who walks to the Articles, and without being told or prompted signs both copies in the correct place in the correct way. If he does, he is the clever, unusual type. Watch him! The average chap approached the printed sheets, looks apprehensive and seeks relief looking for the pen.

W.G.J. writing in "The Nautical Magazine ' February 1952

Dr Oscar Parkes OBE MB ChB

by L.N.R.S. Member Glyn L Evans

Too late to feature in the highly successful exhibition, Hospital Ships and Troopships of World War I, held on board HQS **Wellington** recently, two relevant paintings have come to my attention that I should like to share with you; both painted by Dr Oscar Parkes, of whom more later.

The first is "**Somali** off Cape Helles, 1915, Walking cases coming aboard." She was built by Caird & Co., Greenock in 1901 for the Penninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company as a passenger-carrying cargo liner for their Far East service. As early as 1911 she was involved with Colonial trooping duties, then in 1915, as the painting shows, she was converted to a hospital ship for service in the Dardanelles Campaign. She survived the War and was sold for demolition at Copenhagen in 1923.

The second painting is titled "H.M. Hospital Ship **Karapara**. Destroyers throwing a smoke screen around her after she had picked up survivors from the torpedoed H.M.H.S. **Dover Castle** 26th May 1917." **Karapara** was built by Swan, Hunter & Wigham Richardson, Newcastle in 1914 for the British India Steam Navigation Company and entered service as Naval Hospital Ship No 17, sailing in May 1915 for Gallipoli and operating in the Eastern Mediterranean based at Alexandria. She rescued all 632 patients from H.M.H.S. **Dover Castle**, torpedoed by U-67 north of Bone, and took them to the safety of Gibraltar. The wallowing derelict of **Dover Castle** was sunk by a torpedo from an escort vessel. **Karapara** went on to give further service as Hospital Ship No 36 during WWII, seeing unwelcome action off Perim Island in the Red Sea and off Tobruk. She survived damage from several air attacks, was repaired, returned to commercial service in January 1947 and was scrapped in March 1950.

*Parkes' painting of H.M.S. **Southampton** before Jutland. National Maritime Museum Collection and Wikimedia*

A third painting by Oscar Parkes, relevant to the commemorations that will undoubtedly take place this year, is titled “H.M.S. **Southampton** on the Morning of the Battle of Jutland 31st May 1916.” From the National Maritime Museum Collection. This is the flagship of Commodore W E E Goodenough, commanding the Second Light Cruiser Squadron who, at 04.33, sent out the signal “Have sighted enemy battle fleet, bearing SE. Enemy’s course North. My position 56 degrees 34 North, 6 degrees 20 East.” The rest, as they say, is history. In his book “Jutland” Captain Donald Macintyre concludes “Do the four of them, one muses, Jellicoe and Sheer, Beatty and Hipper, foregather in some naval Valhalla, to argue out again the old question, Who won at Jutland?”

The artist of all three paintings is Dr Oscar Parkes OBE MB ChB who was born in Handsworth, Birmingham in 1885. He graduated from Birmingham University in 1914 for which he played both rugby football and cricket. After holding residential appointments at Birmingham General Hospital, he joined the Royal Navy, being granted a temporary commission as a Fleet Surgeon and serving towards the end of WWI in the Naval Intelligence Division at the Admiralty. He was present at the internment of the German High Seas Fleet aboard H.M.S. **Agincourt**. In 1919 he became official naval artist and director of the naval photographic section at the Imperial War Museum. Also, at this time he was appointed Editor of Jane’s Fighting Ships. He also wrote “The World’s Warships,” published in 1932, “Ships of the Royal Navies (British Commonwealth of Nations” various year editions and “British Battleships, Warrior 1860 to Vanguard 1950. A History of Design, Construction and Armament.” This became a standard reference book on the subject.

Between the wars he practiced medicine in Knightsbridge and acted as adviser in neurology to the Ministry of Pensions. He moved to a medical practice at Ringwood, Hampshire in 1943 and was for a while on the staff at Fordingbridge Hospital. He retired in 1958 and went to live in Northern Ireland where he had been appointed director of a publishing company.

Oscar Parkes died on 24th June 1958 at his home in County Down, aged 72. A colleague of his in the medical profession wrote in his obituary, “He was indeed a real “character” in the true sense of the word, always full of fun, kindliness and energy. But his two chief interests in his leisure hours were his “ships” and his garden. There must be many more capable to tell of his vast knowledge of the Royal Navy, as shown in the fact that for about 17 years he was Editor of Jane’s Fighting Ships. He was a fine artist and very ready to use his gift to entertain others.”

With grateful thanks to BMJ Publishing Group Ltd for their kind permission to reproduce the above short extract from Dr Parkes’ obituary that appeared in the British Medical Journal of 5th July 1958.

RMS **Lusitania**, 1915

- a family letter from Queenstown, Ireland

Robert Bruce-Chwatt

John P Bruce (1884-1926), aged 28, by H Weiss, Fotograf, Hauptort. 76, Vienna

The picture on the front of a postcard is perhaps only part of a story. The date and what is written on the back may be of greater interest to the family historian than the actual picture, even if the copperplate cursive script of a grandparent is sometimes difficult to decipher, even by foreshortening it. The postcard, on the back of which was written: "Please return to: Mr J.P. Bruce 55, Wake Road, Sheffield", was found with two letters, the first a reminder of a watery grave in the cold, grey Atlantic.

Kapt.l.t. W. Schwieger

The Cunard liner **Lusitania** was torpedoed and sunk without any warning by a submarine of the German Imperial Navy on Friday, the 7th May 1915 off Old Head of Kinsale, Ireland. Built in 1906, a 31,500 ton, quadruple screw ship, she had captured the Blue Riband in 1907 with her crossing from Liverpool to New York at an average speed of 23.39 knots. This was 8 knots faster than a surfaced U-boat and 14 knots if it was submerged; as such it was hoped that her speed would keep her safe from U-boat attack. The single torpedo fired on the orders of Kapitan—

Captain W.T. Turner

Lieutenant Schwieger of **U-20** at around 14:10 hours was most probably a G7; 50cm in diameter, 7 metres long and weighing 1.36 metric tonnes.

With a range of 4,000 metres at 37 knots or 9,300 metres at 27 knots, it carried a charge of 195 kg of Hexanite and was driven by a compressed air engine, the pressure boosted by a decahydronaphthalene exothermic wet heater to counter the cooling effect of the expanding compressed air. The mixture of 60% TNT to 40% hexanitro diphenylamaine would have been triggered by an impact - pistol detonator.

Mr Joseph Friedenstein, aged 47, was a business associate of my grandfather, John Pattison Bruce, both being in the steel manufacturing business, a key part of wartime production. Based in

U-20 *(Left of centre at Kiel, 17 February 1914*

Sheffield John Bruce was a junior manager for William Cooke and Sons of the Tinsley Steel, Iron and Wire Rope Works, Tinsley, Sheffield. Mr Friedenstein was one of the overseas directors who had travelled regularly to America and although a British subject may well have been American by birth. He lived in North London with his wife Elizabeth Friedenstein, nee Morse, at 59, Canfield Gardens, Hampstead.

The first letter, dated April 27th 1915, was written by Mr Friedenstein from the Great Northern Hotel on 56th Street, New York, addressed to my grandfather advising him that he would be sailing on the RMS Lusitania on May 1st and hoped to be at London at his home in Hampstead on the 8th of May 1915.

Sadly, he did not arrive at Liverpool, nor would he be in London on the 8th May 1915 as he had planned. He would be one of the 1,198 souls that perished out of a total of 1,962 passengers and crew when she sank very rapidly after a torpedo, fired from Seiner Majestfit Unterseeboot -20, under the command of Kapitan-Lieutenant Walther Schwieger, hit her on the starboard bow just under the wheel house. RMS **Lusitania** sank in about 18 minutes after a mysterious secondary explosion from inside the ship's for'd hold. Most of the victims drowned or died of hypothermia and of the 764 that were picked up alive, three would later die in hospital from their injuries.

Before she left New York, the German Authorities in then neutral America, had published warning that she would be regarded as a legitimate target, but these had been largely ignored. These warning were quite specific and included pamphlets and notices in a number of American newspapers; **Lusitania** was regarded as a legitimate wartime target and would be one of the first ships to fall victim to the unrestricted U-boat warfare which had been declared on the 4th February 1915. The Germans had introduced this, rather than comply with prize rules or cruiser rules, in response to the introduction of Q—ships, merchantmen with concealed deck guns that after heaving too would drop the canvas panels, lower the Red ensign. raise the White ensign and fire on the surfaced U-boat. The Q-prefix referred to their home port of Queenstown, to the Germans they were known as: U-Boot-Fallen or U—boat traps. The Q-ship HMS **Baralong** incident on 18th August 1915 further reinforced the view of the German Naval authorities. Captain William Thomas Turner, OBE, RNR (1856-

1933) was in command of **Lusitania** and she sailed with 833 passengers. She left late from New York due to a snowstorm but was soon heading for Liverpool at her best speed and made good time across the Atlantic. As **Lusitania** neared the south of

BOTH HOTELS UNDER THE SAME MANAGEMENT

GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL

PLAZA HOTEL
CORNER NORTH CLARK ST. AND NORTH AVE.
AT LINCOLN PARK
CHICAGO

GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL
109-121 W. 56TH STREET
NEW YORK

MAIN ENTRANCE
118 W 57TH STREET

NEW YORK, Apr. 27/15.

Mr. J. P. Bruce,
55 Wake Road,
Sheffield, ENG.

Dear Mr. Bruce:

As officially advised, I intend sailing on May 1st on the S/S Lusitania and all going well should be in London on the 8th. I shall be glad if you will send me a line to my house as to anything of interest and also as to the general atmosphere prevailing at Sheffield on matters that may be of personal interest to me.

I have not until this last incoming mail had any letters from Mr. Else, although I realize that he has probably had his hands very full during my absence.

You might also kindly let me know the present price of our shares.

Presumably something is known as to the results of the last year's trading, I have not had any completed figures, so that if you have heard anything, you might report it to me.

I trust you and your family are in the best of health and that you have not been overwhelmed with work during my absence on this side.

I shall probably not go to Sheffield for at least a week after my return, but you might call me up on Monday, the 10th prox. on the telephone and let me know whether there is any real necessity for visiting Sheffield sooner than I have indicated.

Yours sincerely,

Ireland she should have been on a zig-zag course and had been instructed to keep clear of landfalls. Admiralty warnings of U-boat activity in the area do not appear to have been received and at a quarter past two in the afternoon of the 7th of May 1915 she was struck by a single torpedo. This initial explosion was followed shortly afterwards by another explosion, thought to have come from the ship's holds.

The allegation later was that she had been carrying contraband war materiel and allowed to stray into the path of a U-boat by Churchill and Admiral Fisher to help bring America into the war is still much discussed. A manifest produced by the Germans after the disaster certainly showed at least 4 million rounds .303 ammunition made by the Remington Gun Co. and shrapnel shells albeit as yet unfilled with explosive were aboard as well as a large amount guncotton. Of those lost, 124 were American citizens causing uproar in America. Any excuses that the Germans provided were refuted by the US president, Woodrow Wilson in his strongly worded reply. He condemned the action as: ‘piracy on a vaster scale than the worst pirates of history‘ and that the sinking was contrary to the Hague Convention of 1907.

The commemorative iron medal by Karl Goetz and struck by the Germans shortly thereafter showing Death behind the window of the Cunard ticket office in New York on the reverse and the liner going down on the obverse showed remarkable poor taste and was undiplomatic in the extreme. The date on it shows 5 May 1915, two days before the actual sinking leading to aaccusations of pre-planning and deliberate targeting of .

However, and whatever the reasons and despite this provocation to the neutrality of the United States. it would be another two years before the Americans finally came into the war on the Allied side on Friday, 6th April 1911.

The photographic postcard of Mr Friedenstein with his wife and daughter was given to my grandfather before he left for Queenstown by Mrs Friedenstein to show it to people in case they recognised her husband or could identify his body. Taken during a recent holiday that the family had taken at Travemiinde near Liibeck on the Baltic coast, it is a typical studio portrait with a backdrop of waves painted on a canvas screen, a wickerwork windshelter with a fringed striped top for the notoriously windy Baltic coast, a deck chair and a beach spade as a prop for their daughter to hold. All it lacks is a large dried starfish, a lobster pot and a piece of fishnet with a glass float, absent it seems from the props department of “Atelier Rupprechr, neben dem Stmndbohnhof the photographer's address that appears on the back. The photo itself remains a perfect portrayal of a solid middleclass family, including Papa's cigar, relaxing on holiday before the war.

The second of the letters, dated Tuesday, 11th May 1915, was hand written, in now faded ink, from the Westbourne Hotel, Queenstown to my grandmother at home in Sheffield:

"*Dear Stefferl, You would wonder when you got my telegram (this is a rotten pen), if you got it last night' how I came to think that it was the 11th yesterday, but the fact is I was sure yesterday was the 11th , our wedding day and now I find (that) today is the day. Never mind I've been thinking about it (on) both days. I have seen all the bodies of the dead so far here and don't want to see another lot; though some more are expected shortly (17 (bodies) came in today, already picked up by a Dutch tugboat). It is not expected that many more will be found now, though one or two may turn up at intervals. I wired to Mrs F. and naturally she refuses to give up hope yet. One thing is certain, poor old Friedenstein is not now alive. I motored out to Kinsale yesterday 20 miles from Cork, but he was not there and they had buried such as they had for which I was thankful. Mr. Critchison's wife and child are also lost and have not turned up yet. The Chief and Seoond steward knew Friedenstein well and both saw him a few moments before the boat went down, but no one I can find saw him after. He was evidently well liked by those who knew him. The most have now been recognised and buried here or sent home for burial. We who still seek know each other well, by sight at least, and go again and again to the Cunard wharf for information even though we already have all the information they can give, except as for as further bodies are found. The people here are charming and most kind to everybody and everyone praises them. I went today to the hospital and saw one of*

the stewards who had waited on Mr Friedenstein. He has legs badly bruised, but is getting better. We saw too and spoke to an old lady, 74 years old, who was the first to be put in a boat. The boat capsized and she was in the water (two hours she says), but was picked up and landed. She is as bright as a button and wonderfully well. She is going about and only wants some clothes and company to go to friends in England. As l shall wait until the next lot of bodies come in l shall not leave tonight, but hope to do so tomorrow Wednesday (12th May 1915), still l cannot say for certain since l do not want to hurt Mrs. F if she wants me to stay a little longer: Some people are having bills circulated for news of their missing ones and l shall probably do the same so that no chance is left untried. When l leave l may or may not wire (a letter is of little use since l should be home as soon as the letter), but l will wire from Holyhead when l shall arrive in Sheffield. You will then know that l am safe over the water.
Love and büssie from Johnny. '

The seaside postcard was duly left at the Cunard Office with written instructions on the back. It was to be returned to his address after one month, which they did.

The Victorian terraced house at 55 Wake Road still stands, having survived the bombing raids of the 12th to 15th December 1940 in which some 660 people were killed and 1,550 injured. The unimaginative code name chosen by the Germans for that air raid. Operation Schmelztiegel, [Crucible] failing to disguise the target of a steel producing town. Mr Friedenstein's body was never recovered from the sea and in his will he left £7,966 10s 5d to his widow Elizabeth Knight Friedenstein through the Public Trustee; £8000 in 1915 being worth about £775,000 in today's money.

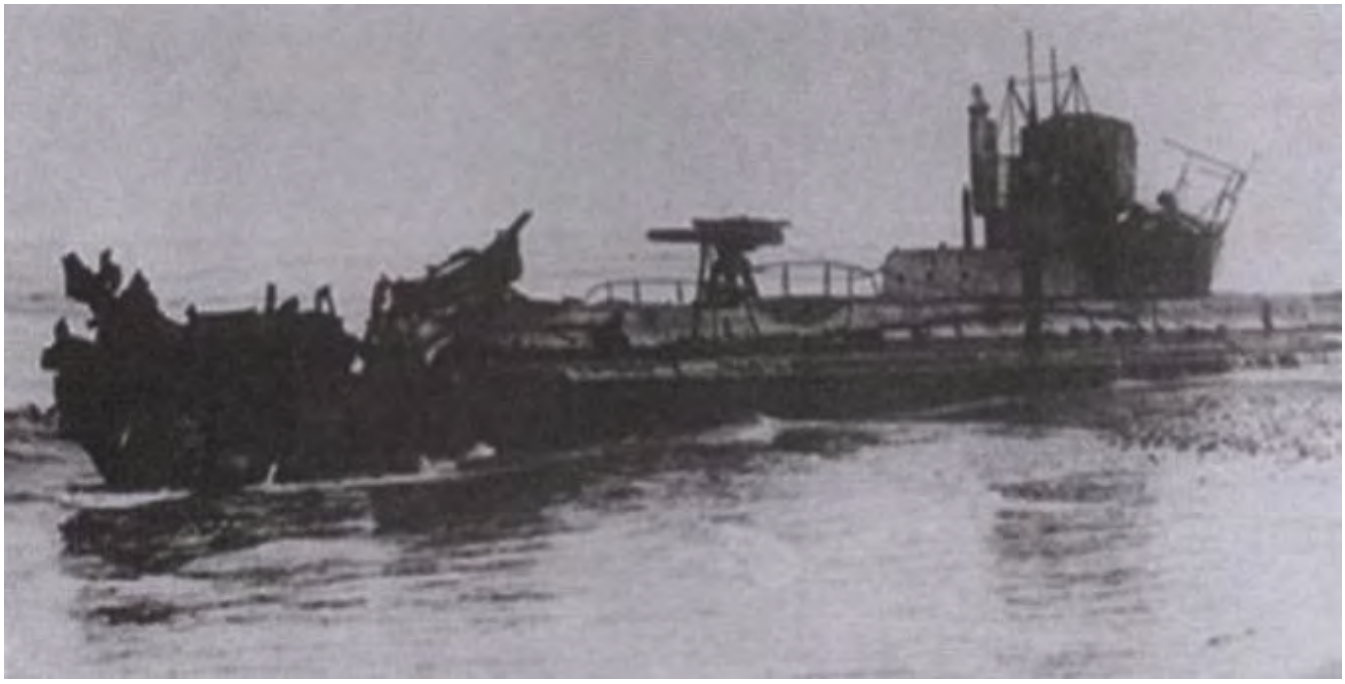
What of Kapitéinleutnant Schwieger and **U-2O**? Having already rather blotted his copy book with the sinking of RMS **Lusitania**, he then managed to blot it again the same year by sinking RMS **Hesperian** of the Allan Line on Tuesday the 4th September 1915 off the Fastnet Rock. This despite the earlier and post **Lusitania** assurances of the German ambassador to America, Count Bernsdorff assuring that: "... passenger liners will not be sunk without warning and without ensuring the safety of the non combatants aboard providing that the liners do not try to escape or offer resistance.'

RMS **Hesperion** had general cargo, but was doubling as a hospital ship and carrying 800 passengers. The abandon ship was orderly and only 32 people lost their lives as the ship did not sink for some 48 hours, allowing most to get into lifeboats with Captain Main and the remains of the crew before it sank

Kapitanleutnant Walther Schwieger was received with official disgust upon his return to his home port of Kiel, and was summonsed to Berlin to explain himself. There he was required to apologise for sinking yet another passenger liner in defiance of the new order not to do so but was allowed to return to sea in command of **U-88**.

He died with all his crew on Saturday, 15th September 1917 when his U-boat hit a stray British mine north of Terschelling, one of the north Friesian Islands, whilst being chased by a disguised HMS **Stonecrop**, the Q-ship **Glenfoyle**. Berlin forgave him just before his final voyage and death, awarding him the Pour Ie Mérite for having sunk 190,000 tons of shipping.

On Tuesday 4th November 1916 his old command **U-20**, under a new Captain, grounded off the Danish coast near Vrist after suffering engine problems and a loss of steerage. Unable to repair the engine or refloat her, the crew blew her bows off by



exploding torpedoes in each of her front tubes, destroying the bow and rendering the vessel unsalvageable. In her Imperial German Navy service from her commissioning on Tuesday, 5th August 1913 until her grounding and deliberate destruction, **U-20** had sunk 39 ships

The conning tower and one of **U-20's** bronze propellers were salvaged as well as the deck gun, an 88mm Schnellodekonone Hinge, 2.64 metres long, with a Krupp horizontal sliding block breech. The gun fired a 15 lb. high explosive shell with a muzzle velocity of 1,900 ft/s and trained crew could fire 15 rounds per minute. The remains of the conning tower stands outside the aptly named 'Strondingmuseum St George'_at Thiorsmoinde, Denmark. The remains of **U-20** were blown up and destroyed by the Danish Navy in 1925.

Juteopolis

by John Richardson

The four masted barque **Juteopolis** of 1891, is said to be a sister ship to the **Lawhill** that was built in the following year, but there were some slight differences between the ships. Indeed, the **Juteopolis** was nine feet shorter of the two, and this difference in length decreased her tonnage by some 10,000 cubic feet, or 100 gross tons. Furthermore, the **Juteopolis** had her t'gallants stepped and fidded in the conventional manner as opposed to **Lawhill's** which were fidded abaft her pole-mast cross trees. Those two items appear to be the only structural differences between the ships.

The **Juteopolis** was built by William B Thompson for Captain Charles Barrie at Dundee - and that's where the four masted barque was registered before joining the once profitable jute trade. Unfortunately, Captain Barrie was quick to find out like so many other jute carrying ship owners, that just a couple of years after **Juteopolis** and **Lawhill** had been built the jute freights dried up. That was because the Indian jute merchants decided to make their own sacks and gunny bags from the jute. 'Why send our jute all the way to Scotland when we can make the same gunny bags right here in India? Instead, we can bypass the Scottish mills and sell the manufactured sacks ourselves.' Such a move not only took the trade away from the jute carriers, but also affected the jute mills of Dundee.

At 2,842 tons, the steel built **Juteopolis** had the jubilee rig of a four masted bald headed barque, and she like her sister **Lawhill** was heavily sparred. Her length is given at 310 feet between perpendiculars; with a beam of 45 feet her depth of hold was 25.1 feet. The crew that normally consisted of 26 had their accommodation in the Liverpool house amidships. The **Juteopolis** was not noted for her speed, and one of her passages is described by Basil Lubbock in his 'Last of the Windjammers':-

> *In 1903 the **Juteopolis** loaded a full cargo of sugar at Illoilo in the Philippines for the USA. However, after leaving the Philippine port in April 1903, she became becalmed for two months and drifted all around the Caroline Islands. Eventually in September of 1903, after having been at sea for five months - and still in the Pacific, she had to put into Honolulu for water and other provisions. That long passage finally ended at New York on 11 February 1904 after 287 days. The length of her passage was blamed on her underwater hull that was covered with seaweed and barnacles even before she'd left Illoilo. Because of her snail like speed that 287-day passage aroused much press coverage in New York.*

George Windram & Co of Liverpool bought the **Juteopolis** from Captain Barrie for an estimated £6,500 in 1912. The ship remained with the firm until after the First World War when she was purchased by the Marine Navigation Company of Canada. Sir William Garthwaite who operated the company was a firm believer in sail training, and it was for this very purpose that the vessel had been bought. She was given a good overhaul and prepared as a sail training ship with extra accommodation being installed in the 'tween decks for 60 cadets. For the benefit of cadet training, reef points were added to the appropriate sails, a jib-boom was added to her bow-sprit and classrooms were installed. The ship was then registered in Montreal and her name changed to **Garthpool**. The ship continued to trade out of British ports, and with her large crew of permanent staff as well as her cadets, she went through all the well tried out methods of sail handling. This procedure was known as 'sorting the men from the boys' and prepared future officers and men for the Mercantile Marine. The **Garthpool** went on the Australian run taking general cargo out and returning to the UK via Cape Horn with grain. Indeed, she was involved in many of the grain races as was her near sister **Lawhill**.

One point of note however, was when she damaged her rudder off Cape Horn in 1926 whilst sailing as one of the 'Grain Fleet.' The **Garthpool** went to Rio de Janeiro for repairs, but after leaving port she was caught badly in the doldrums. The passage eventually took 70 days to make Falmouth where she received orders to discharge at Liverpool.

Even in the year of 1928 the sight of an ocean going sailing ship in the River Mersey was becoming a rare sight. In Basil Lubbock's 'Last of the Windjammers' he states that the **Garthpool** sailed right up to her anchorage in the Mersey under full sail. That great feat of seamanship can only be attributed to the fact that she had a large crew which included 60 well-drilled trainees. Such a performance was no doubt to impress the large crowd of Merseyside spectators of just how well trained they were. Sir William took a keen interest in the ship and her trainees, and she was at all times given the best of everything in which to make her a training success. But unfortunately for him, and the mercantile marine, the **Garthpool** was running at a loss year after year.

She will always be remembered as the last big square-rigged cargo carrier to operate as a sail training vessel under the red ensign. The penultimate voyage of **Garthpool** was when she left the Australian coast in October 1927 on a passage to Cork; she had a full cargo of grain and took 143 days to make her destination arriving there in March 1928. At the end of the trip the ship was given her annual overhaul, but unable to gain a charter, in October 1929 **Garthpool** left the UK shores in ballast for the last time.

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

The Bulletin Volume 63, No. 3, December 2019

Contents

Hurtigruten's mv ***Richard With*** *(1993)* *See page31*

Fort Perch Rock pictured in 2011 *Courtesy Wikimedia* *See page 3*

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Important Changes to Membership Renewal for 2020!

As was agreed at the AGM in May, we have been forced by rising costs to increase our subscription rates for the first time in ten years. It is important that *your bank* receives a new Standing Order as soon as possible. The new SO form is enclosed with this Bulletin. *Don't forget, no money will be taken before 3 April 2020, but early receipt will help all of us.*

We are also introducing a 'digital' Bulletin as a positive choice for the first time. You will receive this as a PDF email, instead of the printed version. The great advantage is that should you opt for this, *your membership rate will remain at £15 and your Standing Order with your bank does not need to change*. The digital process is explained more fully on the next page. The new rates are shown below:

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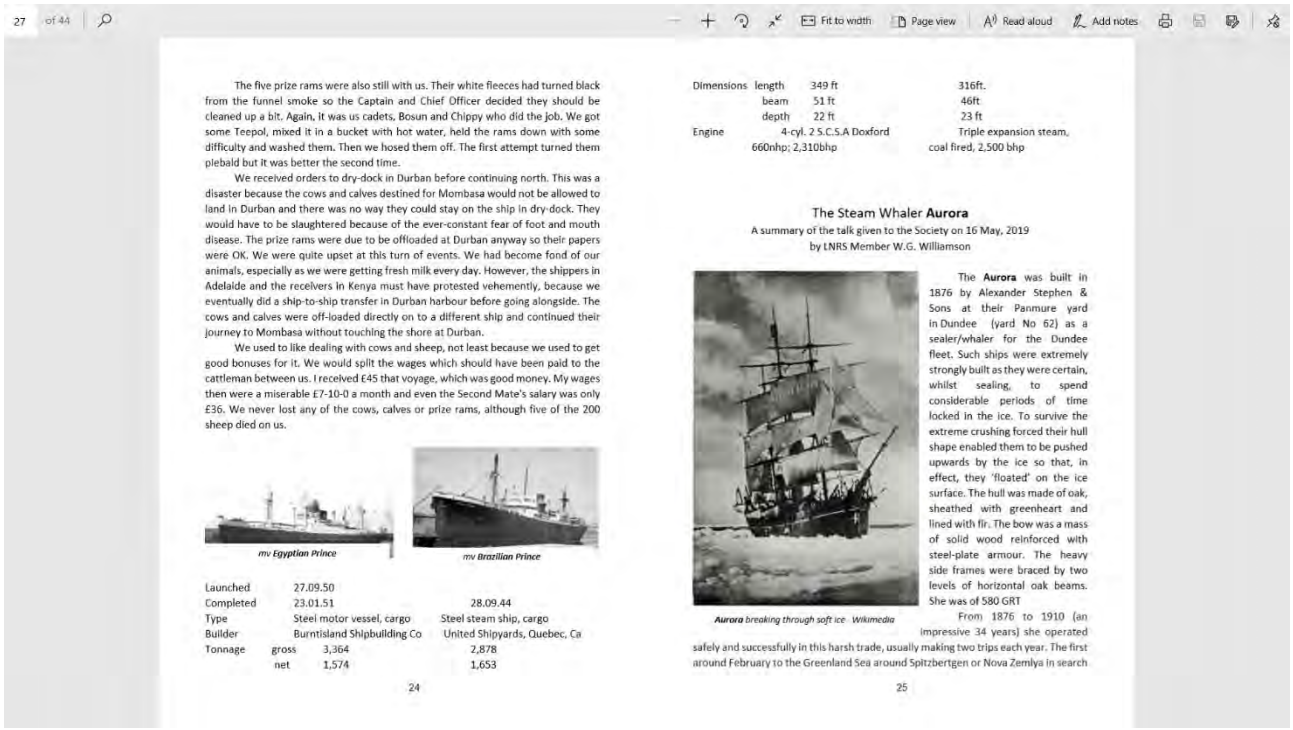
Next year with us promises to be even more exciting. For those who can make the journey to hear our Athenaeum talks, we have Professor Nick White delivering the first Bill Pape lecture on the technological revolution that transformed modern shipping. We will hear the life story of the elegant **Manxman**, plus we will discover the iconic beauty of the maritime art of Kenneth Shoesmith, to name only a few. In addition, the Bulletin will again reward us with its consistent variety of stimulating contributions. Well worth the subscription fee on its own!

Don't forget: A Standing Order is a much easier payment method.
Get it to the bank nice and early!

What does the Digital Bulletin Look Like?

The opposite page gives details and explanations of pending changes to subscription rates. However, you may need to know what does the phrase ‘Digital Bulletin’ mean, and how can I access it?

The standard format for presentation of the Bulletin on either your laptop, tablet or smart phone is as a pdf. This is simply a scroll of all forty-four pages in a continuous roll. For many readers this is fine. However, you may wish to read it as you do a book, with two pages presented all the way through and turning them ‘side-to-side as you would with a book. Looking like this on your screen:



27 of 44 Fit to width Page view Read aloud Add notes

The five prize rams were also still with us. Their white fleeces had turned black from the funnel smoke so the Captain and Chief Officer decided they should be cleaned up a bit. Again, it was us cadets, Bosun and Chippy who did the job. We got some Teepol, mixed it in a bucket with hot water, held the rams down with some difficulty and washed them. Then we hosed them off. The first attempt turned them piebald but it was better the second time.

We received orders to dry-dock in Durban before continuing north. This was a disaster because the cows and calves destined for Mombasa would not be allowed to land in Durban and there was no way they could stay on the ship in dry-dock. They would have to be slaughtered because of the ever-constant fear of foot and mouth disease. The prize rams were due to be offloaded at Durban anyway so their papers were OK. We were quite upset at this turn of events. We had become fond of our animals, especially as we were getting fresh milk every day. However, the shippers in Adelaide and the receivers in Kenya must have protested vehemently, because we eventually did a ship-to-ship transfer in Durban harbour before going alongside. The cows and calves were off-loaded directly on to a different ship and continued their journey to Mombasa without touching the shore at Durban.

We used to like dealing with cows and sheep, not least because we used to get good bonuses for it. We would split the wages which should have been paid to the cattleman between us. I received £45 that voyage, which was good money. My wages then were a miserable £7-10-0 a month and even the Second Mate's salary was only £36. We never lost any of the cows, calves or prize rams, although five of the 200 sheep died on us.

mv Egyptian Prince *mv Brazilian Prince*

Launched	27.09.50		
Completed	23.01.51		28.09.44
Type	Steel motor vessel, cargo		Steel steam ship, cargo
Builder	Burntisland Shipbuilding Co		United Shipyards, Quebec, Ca
Tonnage	gross	3,364	2,878
	net	1,574	1,653

24

Dimensions	length	349 ft	316ft.
	beam	51 ft	46ft
	depth	22 ft	23 ft
Engine		4-cyl. 2 S.C.S.A Doxford 660nhp; 2,310bhp	Triple expansion steam, coal fired, 2,500 bhp

The Steam Whaler **Aurora**

A summary of the talk given to the Society on 16 May, 2019
by LNRS Member W.G. Williamson

Aurora breaking through soft ice. Wikimedia

The **Aurora** was built in 1876 by Alexander Stephen & Sons at their Panmure yard in Dundee (yard No 62) as a sealer/whaler for the Dundee fleet. Such ships were extremely strongly built as they were certain, whilst sealing, to spend considerable periods of time locked in the ice. To survive the extreme crushing forced their hull shape enabled them to be pushed upwards by the ice so that, in effect, they 'floated' on the ice surface. The hull was made of oak, sheathed with greenheart and lined with fir. The bow was a mass of solid wood reinforced with steel-plate armour. The heavy side frames were braced by two levels of horizontal oak beams. She was of 580 GRT

From 1876 to 1910 (an impressive 34 years) she operated safely and successfully in this harsh trade, usually making two trips each year. The first around February to the Greenland Sea around Spitzbertgen or Nova Zemlya in search

25

This format is available on most computers, and on some tablets. Simply “right click” on the pdf copy and select “Open With” and then “Microsoft Edge”; on the top header you can select “Page View” and then “2 page”. You can also expand the document to Full Screen. I know this looks complicated, but it is easier to do than to describe!

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Defending the Mersey

Summary of a talk given on September 19th, 2019 by LNRS Member Tony Barratt

The name Mersey means border, more specifically the border between the Kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria. As with most borders there is a need to monitor them. The Romans had a crossing at their Wilderspool works depot which they no doubt monitored very closely. Later the Mercian Queen Ethelfleda built a castle at Runcorn to watch the Northumbrians north of the river. Her castle was where the southern portal of the Runcorn –Widnes railway bridge now stands; hence the bridge being called the Ethelfleda Bridge. The Normans built Halton Castle from where they could dominate large areas of North Cheshire, South Lancashire as well as the upper estuary. All these fortifications were essentially for internal control.

The first fortification to defend against outside intervention was probably Liverpool Castle built by King John in the 13th Century to protect the borough he had created at Liverpool, and from where the English might want to attack Ireland. At the time of the Armada it is thought that there was only one field gun in Liverpool and that was placed on the northern bank of the Pool, at a location called "Nabb" probably about the junction of James St and the Strand.

In the Civil War most of the defences faced inland although there were some guns at the end of Water Street, facing the river. Six Royalists ships attacked some Parliamentary ships off the town, destroying one.

In the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion great effort was made to defend the town as in the 30 years since the previous Jacobite incursion the opening of the New Dock had meant that the town had boomed. As well as land defences, several warships then building in Liverpool were used to store civic treasures and records as well as guarding ferries bought from further up the Mersey. But only two of the warships, which were moored mid river, had received their armament from Woolwich. Even so some carronade guns were sent from the ships to defend Chester. The Rebels did not come to Liverpool.

The frantic efforts to protect the town in 1745 obviously spurred the authorities to action, for by 1750 a site on the edge of the cemetery of the St Nicholas church was prepared as a battery site, for 14 field guns. By 1758 a further four sites, including the seaward end of James Street, had been identified for field guns. Whether these four sites, which also included Hogs Hey Nook which was earmarked for 8-10 guns, were ever utilised is not clear. The Council also requested the provision of two 44-gun floating batteries, to be moored in the river.

The St Nicholas Cemetery site became separated from the river by Georges Dock and Basin, so it was closed in the 1770s and the site incorporated into the graveyard. This can be taken as the start of the conflict between defence of the port and dock expansion.

New battery sites were placed on the seaward side of Georges Dock and at the entrance to Kings Dock. It was thought that as the standing of the port increased, the reliance on wheeled gun battery sites was inappropriate. So a fort was proposed for a site which was roughly two thirds of the way along what became Princes Dock, so becoming North Fort (1). Probably equipped initially with 12 pounder guns these were replaced by larger guns in the 1790s. However, the Dock Trustees requested the removal of North Fort (1) in 1811 to allow for dock expansion. By this time the Kings Dock Battery seems also to have disappeared.

A site for North Fort (2) was selected on land to the north of what became Clarence Dock (Possibly also the site of the Hogs Hey Nook Battery). The Clarence Dock site was leased to the Board of Ordnance (BoO) in 1817 for 1,000 years, but in 1824 the Dock Trustees asked for the site back. As compensation an alternative site, which as yet I have been unable to locate, but then known as Hayes Bay, was offered. The BoO wanted £5,000 for the old site plus the cost of a replacement fort. Neither party appeared to be happy with the eventual compromise solution for a fort in the dock wall of Huskission Dock and in 1839 a mediator was called in. He suggested that the port should rely on floating batteries. The BoO wanted a 300 yard wide building free zone around any new fort, but this was unacceptable to the Trustees. Progress was only made when the BoO announced its intention to object to the Bill for building the (Royal) Albert Dock if an agreement was not reached.

Both sides ended up with less than they wanted. The BoO had a fort, admittedly angled down river but hemmed in by docks and buildings and the Trustees had a bend in the dock wall which was inconvenient to port operations. As well as the £27,850 previously agreed, the Trustees paid an extra £4,000 for the fort to be faced in a dark granite. This led to the fort having a number of names e.g. The North Fort (3), the North Battery or the Black Fort. An agreement was thought to have been reached in 1841, but as early as 1843 the Trustees wanted to relocate the proposed fort to Bootle Bay. It was to be 1849 when both parties finally and reluctantly accepted the Huskission Dock solution. However due to the protracted discussions the Treasury had not made provision in its estimates, so the work was not completed until 1854, thirty years after discussions started and thirteen years after North Fort (2) was demolished. It is possible that the prospects of a war in the Crimea concentrated minds. The new fort had 14 x 68 pdr guns, and needed 250 men to fully man it, some of these being locally based volunteers. It was located about one mile upstream of Fort Perch Rock. Within five years pressure was building from the Trustees for the fort to be moved to a new site at Seaforth.

But first it might be appropriate to see what was happening on the Wirral Shore. In the 1770s it had been suggested that there should be some semi-permanent gun positions on the Wirral shore, but I have not been able to find out where. By the

1790s it was being suggested that two batteries totaling nine guns should be set up at New Brighton. Almost certainly these would have been on the outcrops known as Red Rocks and Yellow Rocks (Red Rocks is now the site of the two tower blocks overlooking Liverpool Bay). At this time the main access to the Mersey was via the Rock Channel which passed within 3-400 yards of these gun positions and the guns had a range of about 1000 yards. However, because of the height of the gun positions they would only have been able to give plunging fire rather than broadside fire on to the target. It may be for this reason that in 1797 it was suggested that another battery should be sited close to where Fort Perch Rock now stands.

The Wirral shore began to be looked on more favourably than the Liverpool shore as it was not affected by the rapid expansion of the dock system. From 1803 a permanent fort was being suggested for the Perch Rock site. The destruction of the navigation perches in 1821 and again in 1824 encouraged these deliberations. There were discussions on incorporating the lighthouse in the fort and vice versa. One idea was for a lighthouse mounting two heavy guns. In the end separate structures were decided up on. Fort Perch Rock was completed in 1829 with 18 guns, 16x32prdrs pointing out to sea and two18pdrs facing landward, although the Duke of Wellington wanted the fort to have 36 guns. The cost was £26,965 and it was manned by up to 100 men, mostly local volunteers. By the 1850s the Rock Channel was beginning to silt up so some 64pdr guns were installed at Fort Perch Rock to allow it to also cover the Crosby Channel.

The 1850s also saw a great debate on whether coastal defence was a naval or military responsibility. Added to this coastal towns preferred land fixtures rather than guard-ships which were capable of being relocated. In the Army there were also contrary opinions being expressed by the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers, the parts of the army that jointly operated coastal defences.

In 1851 a battery of seven guns was built at Liscard and in 1854 a review of Mersey defences felt there was a need for six 4.6 inch gun batteries in addition to Fort Perch Rock and a new sister fort at Seaforth. Questions were also asked about what damage missed shots from the Liscard Battery could do to the Liverpool dock system. The complexities of harbour defence were further complicated by the launch of the French ironclad **Gloria** and the events of the American Civil War.

Seaforth Fort was completed in 1879 after the Inspector General of Forts reported his “alarm” at the state of the Mersey defences. Seaforth had 4x12.5 inch guns and was clad in iron. It also had seven saluting guns. The total cost was an amazingly precise £53,632:8s:4d.

Completion of the Seaforth Fort allowed the demolition of the North Fort (3) at Huskisson Dock and additional defences were provided for the port. Controlled

minefields were laid between Perch Rock and Seaforth which at one point were controlled from Liscard.

In 1882 Lord Morley suggested a five gun battery at Crosby and a nine vessel defensive force based at a basin to be constructed probably on the North Reserve close to Seacombe Ferry landing stage. This fleet would consist of four torpedo craft, four gunboats and a guard ship. Generally, Lord Morley's recommendations were well received although the Royal Engineers wanted a new Crosby battery to be fitted with torpedoes and Lord Morley also proposed another fort to be built at Leasowe, which would have had three 10.4 inch guns, presumably firing into Liverpool Bay.

For much of the Nineteenth Century the fortifications did not have to confront an enemy of Great Britain. That was however about to change. The range and hitting power of guns expanded greatly leading to the re-equipping of the existing defences and the construction of new ones. Three new 6 inch guns had been planned to be installed at Fort Perch Rock in 1897 (initially only two were fitted). To facilitate these guns major structural changes were needed. The seaward facing battlements were lowered by about fifteen feet. This allowed the new guns to engage targets as close as 150 yards from the new central emplacements on a wall built across what had been the central courtyard, with the space created between the reduced wall and the new wall being filled with sand, this gave nearly 100 feet of protection to the new gun emplacements.

The Liscard Battery was closed in 1894 and sold to the Royal Liverpool Yacht Club. Today the outer walls protect five houses which have been built inside them.

In 1897 the four old 12.5 inch guns at Seaforth were replaced by only 2 modern 6 inch gun, to dissuade an enemy fleet from attacking the port. It had been intended to install three guns but one was not fitted, apparently for financial reasons. This now meant the river was protected by three forts each with two 6" guns.

The new defences were tested during an exercise in 1909 when a cruiser and two destroyers only narrowly failed to get into the river. At about this time there were also two 4.7 inch guns, a howitzer, some 12 pounder field guns and a number of machine guns stored in the Customs House basement and some local artillery regiments had guns which could be used as reserves.

As an example of the improvement in the effectiveness of the new artillery, an old 12 pdr gun might have a range of 1,800 yards whilst a modern 4.7 inch gun could fire a 45 pounder shell 13,000 yards, the 6 inch guns could fire 20,200 yards and fire a significantly greater number of shells per minute. However, after 1904, faith in the controlled minefield was reduced due to experience of their use in the Russo – Japanese War so they were removed. Each of the forts could hold up to 1,500 six inch shells. At each of the forts search lights were also upgraded.

By 1914 the three missing 6 inch guns had been installed. Fort Perch Rock was the first into action when an approaching Norwegian sailing ship was fired on for not stopping when signalled to do so. The ship didn't know that war had been declared. The first shot cleared the ship and landed on Hightown beach. It was recovered by the Lancashire force which retained it and labelled it as "A present from New Brighton". More seriously the second shot hit the bow of an anchored Allan Line vessel.

During the war Perch Rock and Crosby each lost a six inch gun, which went for use on the Western Front. The missing guns were replaced in 1923.

With the end of the war the Seaforth Fort site was required for the much delayed Gladstone Dock Project. As it was, since the Gladstone Dry Dock had been commissioned in 1913, the fort had been right at the start of the direct access channel to the dock from the river.

During the 1930s a 4 inch gun was installed at Crosby, for training purposes. In the late 1930s three 5.25 inch anti aircraft guns, were proposed for Crosby. These could also be used against shipping, and would replace the 6 inch guns. This did not happen. It did however gain some lighter AA guns at the start of the War which were situated about 150 yards to the north of the fort. Perch Rock gained an early form of radar, on the West Tower. This was a year before the fort was disguised as an amusement park, with fake grass and a fake ice cream stall.

With what is claimed to be the first shot of the Second World War, at 11.15 am on the 3rd September 1939, Perch Rock fired a warning shot across the bows of a fishing vessel entering by the Rock Channel. As in the previous incident this vessel did not know of the declaration of war. Later in the War and so as not to be left out Crosby fired at what it thought was a periscope out in the Bay.

The 'Maunsell' Sea Fort Picture from Wikimedia

Crosby Fort closed in 1944 with the gun emplacements being placed on a Care & Maintenance basis. The domestic buildings became a POW camp from 1945 to 1950, although not before it had been used as a recuperation camp by British POWs returning from the Far East. Between 1950 and 1957 the Crosby Camp was used by the Territorial Army. Fort Perch Rock had been handed over to the Home Guard in 1943, and in 1944, the four twin 5.25 AA guns which had been placed on the bowling greens close to Fort Perch Rock were removed. Fort Perch Rock's guns were to be heard one more time when they were fired as part of the Festival of Britain celebrations. They were

returned to Woolwich Arsenal in 1954. In 1941 a whole new line of forts was proposed. Originally 38 towers were to be built in groups of seven to enable AA defences to be placed out in Liverpool Bay. Only 21 were built. Other ports were designated to receive these forts but only the Thames did so. The forts were not entirely suited to the mobile sand conditions of the Mersey approaches but it was Hitler's attack on Russia which reduced German aerial activity over Britain, so reducing the justification for completing the full programme. The forts built had four 94mm AA guns and one or two 40mm AA guns. Along with a search light tower and a control and radar tower. Each tower weighed 750 ton and was spaced 100 feet from the next tower linked by a rigid walkway between each tower. The layout of the towers was the same as for a land based AA site. Each fort had a crew of 130 who served six weeks on and 10 days off. They were not easy locations to live on and a condition known as "Fort Madness" was common.

The 21 forts built for the Mersey cost £336,000, and were constructed at Bromborough. They were installed between October 1942 and July 1943, by Cleveland Bridge & Engineering Limited. Most if not all the larger AA guns were not manned to release men for other duties.

Because of sea bed conditions the Mersey forts had been built on, they were quickly dismantled, but not until Crosby had used them for target practice! The Thames forts were left and have been the home of several pirate radio stations.

Perch Rock was decommissioned in 1956 and offered to Wallasey and Liverpool Councils, who declined to take it. It was sold by auction in 1958 and underwent several years of unsympathetic use until 1976, when it was purchased by an architect who commenced some sympathetic restoration, including the removal of the sand infill between the original walls and the new wall put in to accommodate the six inch guns installed in the 1890s. The site of Fort Crosby is now owned by Sefton Council but most of the evidence of the fort has been removed or buried under the sand.

MONDAY MEETINGS

Sadly, we have to report that there will be a further closure of the Museum Archives. The Merseyside Maritime Museum have advised that "*the Archives and Library at the Merseyside Maritime Museum will close to the public at 4.30pm on Tuesday 17th December 2019 and, due to gallery construction work, and will not reopen until Monday 30th March 2020 at 10.30am. Staff can be contacted via email and telephone during the closure period but will only have limited access to collections. We apologise for any inconvenience."*

Saga of m.v. **San Demetrio** - Part Two

By LNRS member Gordon Bodey

This concludes the updating of an article which the author first published in the Bulletin of June, 2001

It is not possible to detail the multitude of tasks, repairs, overhaul of equipment and machinery, checks on the viability of the electrical and mechanical parts of the propulsion system *et al*. These were carried out under extreme conditions of cold and discomfort, with little sustenance or without sleep, by the Chief Engineer and his three men over the first eighteen hours back on board. However, one of these men merits particular notice here.

John Boyle, the engine-room greaser, had suffered injury and exposure, but despite his suffering he worked with a will and with great fortitude until the night of Friday, 8th November when he collapsed Although too ill to carry on his normal duties, he insisted on staying in the engine-room, so Mr Pollard arranged a box for him to sit on to control the firing and maintaining steam pressure in the boiler. By Saturday night he had to be laid in his bunk where he lay uncomplaining in what scant comfort could be improvised, but died about midnight on Sunday,10th November. He had apparently suffered severe internal injuries when he fell into the boat. His body was to be allowed to remain on the ship for now.

By the morning of Friday, 8th November, the danger of fire was all but over. A pump had been rigged and left operating continuously overnight in the engine-room, and by morning it was virtually water-free. Soundings taken of all double-bottom tanks were found to tally fairly well with those prior to the attack, indicating that there was no damage below the waterline. A major morale booster was the Chief Engineer's means of providing hot meals, albeit always potatoes and onions: he put them in a bucket of water and then inserted a steam hose.

Because all the normal communications equipment between the bridge and the engine-room had been destroyed, a very primitive but workable system of three lights, placed in line fore and aft high up in the engine room was installed. The forward light on meant '*ahead*'; flickering of the same light meant '*more speed*'. The middle light on meant '*stop engine*', and the after light on signalled for the engine to '*go astern*'. Someone had to knock on the engine room skylight with a hammer to draw the engineer's attention to any change in the lights, but the system worked well. In addition, because the main steering equipment had been destroyed, control of the tiller had to be improvised from the charred remnants of the small wheel in the steering flat aft, after unbuckling the plates around the vertical shaft connecting it to the bevels below. But it worked.

On the afternoon of Friday, 8th November at 14.00, the engines were tested going ahead and astern and were found to be working well. Half an hour later the order was passed to proceed ahead. It is beyond belief that all the foregoing was accomplished in just 24 hours from when the crew, in a very debilitated and parlous state, had re-boarded her, but she had resumed her passage home.

It now fell to the deck department's skills to navigate the long, arduous and dangerous passage home, which was estimated to be about a thousand miles away (a remarkably good estimate). The task was, in addition to the severe restraints above mentioned, severely hampered by three other major factors:

- The compass binnacle was smashed and the compass unserviceable
- The chronometer was beyond use and nobody had a serviceable watch
- There was no sextant available.

Second Officer Mr Hawkins (now acting captain), and John Lewis Jones the apprentice, had the onerous task of navigating by stars, sun, and the first gleam of sunrise and the last of sunset - if they were to be seen at all - and a school atlas. The off-and-on north-westerly gales of the previous three days had driven the ship progressively southward. Where a landfall would be made, if at all, could not even be guessed at - the coast of France was just as likely as that of Ireland. S.O.S and HELP had been painted in large white letters on various parts of the deck and what was left of the superstructure in the hope that they would be seen by a patrolling aircraft.

Despite being able to make headway at up to nine knots, the often deteriorating weather combined with her being still down at the head due to the flooded forehold (which could not be pumped out because the forward ballast pump could not be made to work) caused a great amount of water to be shipped through the shell hole in the bow. This made the ship's response to the helm very sluggish and she was, therefore, difficult to handle.

The problem was partly solved on Sunday 10th when the vessel's trim was altered by opening the valves from the most forward tank, No. 9, and transferring part of its contents to space in No. 6 tank just abaft midships. This caused a slight list to starboard but her head was brought up making her more manageable. The operation was accomplished by the Chief Engineer and the apprentice going down into the bottom of the fuel-laden pump-room where they worked at great risk to their own safety.

Tuesday, 12th November started with a strong south-westerly gale, but this moderated as the day wore on. There was now some anticipation of making a landfall and a very keen lookout kept from various parts of the ship, which went on throughout the night with all hands, except the engine-room staff, involved.

At first light on Wednesday, the cry '*Land ahead*' went up. **San Demetrio** cruised slowly to and fro along the coastline all day looking for a sheltered bay with

deep enough water where they might take shelter (an anchor could not be dropped as they did not have the means to haul it up). None suitable could be seen, nor could it be decided where they might be. A lighthouse[4] and some cottages were seen, but the ship did not seem to have attracted anyone's attention; indeed, not a soul was sighted on shore.

San Demetrio's crew, in the firm belief that they would get the ship back home, still had the body of John Boyle on board, but in view of the continuing uncertainty as to their own fate, it was now decided to commit his body to the sea. At about 08.00 on Thursday, 14th November, after a short service conducted by Mr Hawkins, the body, covered in the Red Ensign that had flown aft throughout their ordeal, was committed to the deep.

Shortly after the ceremony, it was decided that Oswald Preston and Callum Macneil should paddle ashore in a small Shetland dinghy, which was still intact except for oars and sails, to seek help. Whilst they were in the act of getting it into the water, a plane suddenly appeared and signalled '*Help on the way*'. The elation this produced can be readily imagined.

Within minutes, the naval tug **Superman** was sighted and was soon alongside. **San Demetrio**'s crew was told by the tug that they were now near Black Sod Bay [This is a large, branched, rocky bay on the Atlantic-facing County Mayo coast bounded to the south by Achill Head, and to the north and west by the Mullet peninsula] and the tug was there to take them to the Clyde; but a tow was definitely not going to be accepted after bringing the ship this far by their own Herculean efforts. It is estimated that they had averaged 8½ knots on the passage to this point.

San Demetrio *Proceeding up the Clyde, to Bowling, Tuesday, November 19th, 1940*

Soon after the tug's arrival, the destroyer H.M.S. **Arrow** came to the scene and supplied a boarding party to assist with the last leg of the passage, and also provided from her own meagre stores (being herself on the last leg of a long arduous passage) some very welcome provisions. The **Arrow**'s doctor also went across to attend those of the crew needing medical attention. Some survivors from the ship wrecked **Empire Wind** (the Second Officer

and three engineers) on board **Arrow**, also transferred across to **San Demetrio** to assist on the last leg home. Mr Hawkins decided to take the 'north about' route home, and so they set off - at times leaving the tug behind - for the Clyde. The only incident before reaching the Clyde was when **Arrow** destroyed a drifting mine.

On the evening of Friday, 15th November, 1940, ten days after her momentous, and hardly credible, ordeal and odyssey began, **San Demetrio**, with her ensign flying at half-mast, lay at the mouth of the River Clyde. At daybreak the following morning, battered and fire-ravaged, but unbowed, she steamed up the Firth and dropped anchor in Rothesay Bay. On Tuesday, 19th November, after pumping out the after pump-room and the forehold, she moved up to a berth at Bowling under her own power at 16.30 to commence discharging upwards of 10,000 tons of her original 11,200 ton cargo.

Aftermath

When the worst of their ordeal was over, the crew of **San Demetrio** discussed at length the apparent paradox of having a vast quantity of low flash-point (The flash-point of an inflammable liquid is '*the lowest temperature at which the vapour above the liquid will burn*'.) cargo beneath their deck, and above deck two serious fires burning - especially as petrol had been constantly spurting from numerous shrapnel holes in the deck. They were well aware that there was a logical explanation for the expected catastrophe not occurring, though it was inexplicable at that time. The following is offered as an explanation.

Some of the crew of the ship, taken after their return to Glasgow. At the centre is Chief Engineer Charles Pollard, to his right is Mess Room Steward John Jamieson.

It is the vapour given off from an inflammable liquid that ignites in, and whose combustion is sustained by, the oxygen of the surrounding air. The means of ignition were constantly present and numerous small flares occurred intermittently; that these did not lead to the catastrophe expected may have been due to one or more of the following factors:

i. It was winter and both the sea and air temperatures were very low. As the amount of vapour given off by a liquid is temperature-dependent, it is reasonable to assume that the relatively small amounts of low-temperature

escaping cargo (critically none of the tanks had been ruptured), would not have been producing vapour in sufficient quantities to maintain combustion at a level that would become self-sustaining and uncontrollable.

ii. The sea, during the time that the vessel was adrift, was constantly washing over the deck and dispersing the cargo that was spilling from the holes therein (and dousing any small flares), and washing it overboard, thus helping to keep any build up of vapour below the critical level.

iii. For all the time **San Demetrio** was adrift, strong to gale-force winds were blowing, which would have dispersed the vapour as it formed from the spilling volatile petrol, thus also preventing the build-up of sufficient concentration of vapour to maintain any combustion that might have occurred. Conversely, had it been summer, the sea calm and the winds light.

Regardless of the above points, the element of uncertainty was perilously weighted against the men who re-boarded the ship - and they did so knowing that this was the case. Theirs was an act of inestimable courage *in extremis*.

The crew members who brought the **San Demetrio** home, with the full assistance of the Eagle Oil & Shipping Co., and which voluntarily paid the plaintiff's costs, were subsequently awarded salvage; surely among the most hard-earned and meritorious awards on record. The judge, Mr Justice Langton, hearing the case, after making the award, thanked everyone for giving him the happiest day's work that he had ever been called on to do. The award, in respect of the ship's value of £240,000, and cargo £60,000, was for £14,700. Had Captain Waite been aboard no salvage would have been payable. Further to the salvage award, the following, most meritoriously-earned awards were given to those courageous men involved in the epic odyssey:

Charles Pollard, Chief Engineer,	O.B.E. (Civil) and Lloyd's Bravery Medal
A.G.N. Hawkins, Second Officer	O.B.E. (Civil)
George Pears Willey, Third Engineer	M.B.E.
John Davies, Storekeeper	B.E.M.
Walter Fletcher, Bosun	B.E.M.
Oswald Preston, A.B.	B.E.M.
John Lewis Jones, Apprentice	B.E.M. and Lloyd's Bravery Medal
John Boyle, Greaser	Posthumous Commendation

However, Callum Macneil's only official recognition was that his name was published in the *London Gazette* on 13th May, 1941 as *'commended for brave conduct in the Merchant Navy*' - surely a less than adequate recognition of the man's bravery, conduct and vital service on that voyage.

Notes

[1]The **Stureholm** (Captain Sven Olander), having landed the **Jervis Bay** survivors, took on board Mr Wilson (Chief officer), and Mr Duncan and Mr Baird, 2nd and 5th engineers respectively, of the **San Demetrio** who had been rescued by the **Gloucester City** (of which more anon) and set off for Britain. At 57^0 50' N, 08^0 40' W (about 10 miles north of St Kilda), on 12th December, 1940, she was torpedoed by U-96. There were no survivors.

[2]After the above action **Admiral Scheer** headed south, and soon was free to roam the south Atlantic in the latitude of Capetown. At that time, the German High Command claimed complete destruction of Convoy HX84. The ships lost were:

Jervis Bay -14,164 GRT. Armed Merchant Cruiser and escort vessel. 190 crew lost, 65 crew saved.

Beaversford - 10,042 GRT. Bound from Montreal to Liverpool carrying 8,425 tons of general cargo. All 77 crew were lost. Her loss resulted from an attempt to ram the **Admiral Scheer**. The attempt did divert the raider's attention temporarily, but resulted in **Beaversford**'s rapid and total destruction.

Kenbane Head - 5,225 GRT. Bound from Montreal and Sydney, N.S. for Belfast & Dublin carrying general cargo. Of a crew of 43, one passenger and one gunner, 23 crew were lost.

Maidan - 7,861 GRT. Bound from New York carrying munitions. No survivors. She was not listed in Lloyd's War Losses book. This may have been a deliberate omission owing to the fact that the U.S. was not then in the war, and such information would have been still politically sensitive long after the event.

Trewellard - 5,205 GRT. Bound from Boston and Halifax for Liverpool carrying 7,800 tons of steel and 12 aircraft. 2 crew died and 14 were missing, presumed dead.

Fresno City - 4,955 GRT (as a result of damage sustained in the attack, she sank at 51^0 47' N, 33^0 29' W.) She was bound from Montreal and Sydney, N.S. for Oban carrying 8,129 tons of maize. One man of her 37 crew was killed.

[3]Oswald Preston -'Yank' - was presented with the **San Demetrio**'s ensign by the crew, as a token of their regard. He is thought to have been killed some months later when the *Overseas Club* in London was destroyed by a bomb

[4]Mr Thomas Scanlan, principal keeper on Clare Island Light at the entrance to Clew Bay (about twelve miles south of Achill Head), had seen the ship when she first made landfall and had sent a telegram to Dublin, which set in train the dispatch of the RAF plane, the tug **Superman** and the destroyer H.M.S. **Arrow**.

Gloucester City (Bristol City Line of Steamships). On the night of the attack, the **Gloucester City**, which had lost its own convoy, picked up a signal from **Jervis Bay** stating that its convoy was under attack and gave its position. Captain Sydney Glyn Smith on **Gloucester City**, knowing that there would be survivors adrift, steamed to the given position. He showed remarkable courage in doing so as he could not have known that **Admiral Scheer** had retired from the scene.

At the scene of the attack he criss-crossed in a 30-mile wide circle throughout the night, during which he picked up Captain Waite and three of his crew in a lifeboat; from another he picked up Chief Officer Mr Wilson; also the occupants of six other lifeboats, and from life-rafts. In all, ninety-two survivors who were taken to Newfoundland. Captain Smith was subsequently awarded the O.B.E. for his action. On 16th July, 1942, at approximately 08^0 S, 01^0 E., **Gloucester City** was sunk by the auxiliary cruiser **Michel**.

Postscript

Sixteen months after her epic voyage, **San Demetrio** (Captain Conrad Vidot) bound from Baltimore for Halifax, N.S. and the UK, carrying 4,000 tons of ethanol and 7,000 tons of motor spirit, was torpedoed on 17th March, 1942 at position 37º03' N, 73º50' W (about 100 miles due east of the entrance to Chesapeake Bay) by U-404. 16 crew and 3 gunners were lost; there were 34 survivors. Captain Vidot was subsequently awarded the O.B.E.

Admiral Scheer was bombed by the RAF in Kiel Harbour, 9th April, 1945, and capsized.

Acknowledgements and Sources consulted:

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Saga of San Demetrio. J.F. Tennyson (H.M.S.O., 1942)

San Demetrio. C. Macneil

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War at Sea, 1939-1945, The. Captain S. Roskill, RN

World's Merchant Fleets,1939, The. Roger Jordan

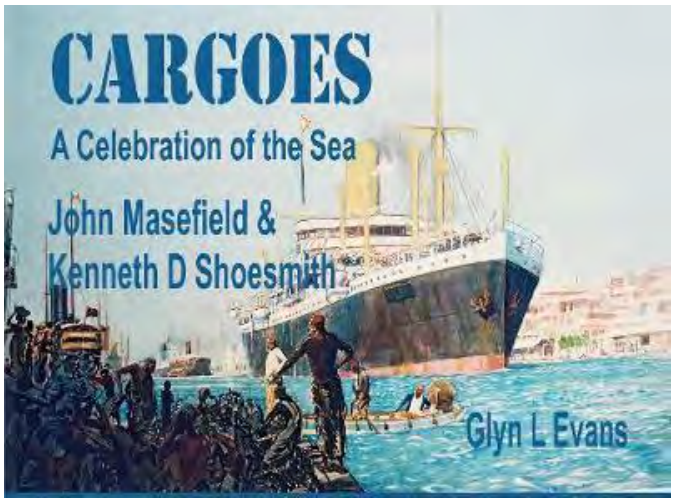
[Editors note, the Salvage Awards are reported to have been: Arthur Godfrey Hawkins (Second Officer)-£2,000; Charles Pollard (Chief Engineer)-£2000; George P. Willey (Third Engineer)-£1,400; John L. Jones (Apprentice)-£1,200; W.E. Fletcher (Boatswain)-£1,200; John Boyle (Greaser)-£1,000, Posthumously; J. Davies (Storekeeper)-£1,000; Oswald Preston (Able Seaman)-£1,000; C. McNeil (Able Seaman)-£1,000; Roderick McLennan (Able Seaman)-£800; John Halloran (Second Steward)-£600; John Jamieson (Mess Room Steward)-£600; John Porter (Assistant Steward)-£300; Clifford Cottis (Ordinary Seaman)-£300; Roy Housden (Cadet)-£200 and G. Mortimer (Able Seaman)-£100]

New Book

CARGOES –A Celebration of the Sea

Many years ago, the poet John Masefield and the maritime artist Kenneth D Shoesmith were both cadets in the training ship HMS **Conway** when she was moored in the River Mersey. Although their terms were ten years apart, they did later come to know each other through their membership of the Seven Seas Club, London. In fact, Shoesmith went on to design the jackets for several of Masefield's books. Like myself, I am sure many members of the LNRS will recall from their schooldays the opening lines of Masefield's sea-ballad *Sea Fever* "I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky, and all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by." Perrhaps also, from Masefield's poem, Cargoes, the verse beginning "Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack."

I had thought for some time it was a shame these two men did not collaborate to produce a book to combine their efforts, so I decided to do something about this. My book, CARGOES, sets out to examine how such a collaboration between these two masters of their craft might have flourished, and to envisage the finished article.



When a poet or artist is able to truly capture, in words or pictures, man's fight for mastery of the sea, he may be counted by those who fully appreciate these two art forms, a master of his craft. The honours conferred upon Masefield (Order of Merit) and Shoesmith (Member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colour) speak for themselves.

The book, in hard back and fully illustrated, mainly in colour, is available from Saron Publishers, Pwllmeyrick House, Mamhilad, Mon. NP4 8RG. Price £30 plus P&P.

Email saronpublishers@btinternet.com for more information or order from their website www.saronpublishers.co.uk

Glyn Evans was born in Birkenhead in 1944 and began his career as a marine insurance underwriter in Liverpool in 1961. Now retired and living in Kent with his wife, Ruth, he is kept busy writing articles on maritime art for various journals and shipping magazines. His two previously published books are *The Maritime Art of Kenneth D Shoesmith* and *Dazzle-Painted Ships of World War I.* Glyn is a member of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners, the Seven Seas Club and the Liverpool Nautical Research Society.

Crossing the Pond

by Lennox Mackenzie
and first published by him in the
Radio Officers Association journal "QSO" of March 2018.

Note: This story is of a somewhat less than normal voyage on Brocklebank Line's 1945 built ss ***Manipur****/GBJZ . At this time Brocklebanks ran what was called the triangular service where vessels left the UK for discharge in Calcutta, loaded there for discharge in the Gulf ports of the USA and then loaded again for the voyage back to the UK. This made the voyages somewhat longer than normal, but the run was popular.*

After a spot of sun-bathing, coming down from monkey island for my afternoon tea and tabnabs, the sight of two large white sharks about a hundred feet off our port side and travelling with us, was awesome but for me it also seemed to hold a sense of menace, if for no other reason than if I lost my grip I'd be pitched into the water beside them! Their dorsal fins were just below the surface as they moved effortlessly northwards. It is doubtful if the sighting of one, never mind two of them is a portent of bad news but whatever it was, that's what it turned out to be. Having left Tampa our last Gulf loading port, we were now travelling up the eastern seaboard of the Florida Keys and being helped along by the Gulf Stream. The weather was delightfully warm and the southerly wind strong enough to make the water sparkle and break as the ship moved onwards easily. It was good to be alive and heading home but the weather forecasts from WSL, Amagansett Long Island (one of the biggest North Atlantic weather stations), were not at all reassuring.

As time went on and as proof of WSL's forecasts, the winds were beginning to increase ominously and the clouds became more ragged and darker as if they were dirty pieces of torn paper racing up a street. They were also quickly blotting out the blue sky. The rain was beginning to lash down making visibility virtually nil and with a noise which was deafening. We were now heading out into the Atlantic. The wind had veered westerly and built up rapidly increasing to storm force and before too long was increasing to violent storm. This didn't auger well and the weather was coming up on our stern. By now we had seas filling the well decks and sweeping along the alleyways. The Old Man decided to heave to before we were truly pooped. The engine room was informed of the proposed manoeuvre. As it was 0200 I suppose on the bridge if we thought about them at all, we assumed those sleeping would be safe enough held in by their bunk boards.

Captain Eggleston waited for a good moment in the ever increasing maelstrom to make his move but before that could happen the engine room

telegraph suddenly rang to STOP. For a fleeting moment there was a startled look among ourselves silently saying ‘what the....’

"Hard a‘ port", Eggleston shouted and the quartermaster spun the wheel as fast as he could but we were rapidly losing way and before any real movement could be effected we were broadside to the seas, and slid into the trough to lie there dead in the water. Dead is perhaps the wrong word to use for all hell was let loose.

Like a tidal wave the sea came rushing along the outboard and inboard port alleyways flooding the electric galley and all the portside accommodation. No. 2 hold portside aft ventilator cowl disappeared without touching anything on its way! The cross alleyway storm door was smashed down and the freshwater stand pipes were swept away. On the Old Man’s deck the port side wooden cutter was shattered but remained in its falls and chocks. Chippie and the Cassab had their work cut out making things watertight again. A further casualty was the turbo vent motor which supplied heating to the crews‘ accommodation. This was so smashed up that the electricians said it was useless and would have to be replaced. A meeting was held in the saloon to discuss this and it was agreed that if it could be done, they should take the motor which supplied our accommodation and use it for the crew. In the days before home central heating we all knew the joys of waking up in bedrooms whose windows were covered in fern-patterned ice and your breath hung in the air like a fog!

The cause of all this was that as we pitched more and more, to prevent the propeller racing, the fuel feed governors cut in but unfortunately jammed shut, hence the total shut down. Fuses blew all over the place and we were in total darkness apart from emergency battery lighting. The switch under the radio room operating desk brought on our emergency lighting, however we were totally isolated from the rest of the ship.

Strangely enough that didn’t worry us at all but how were we going to be fed? We got into the pantry but that only provided a large box of Saltine Biscuits and two bottles of diluting orange juice, a big help without fresh water! We would be demanding our pound and pint and to effect this we headed for the chief steward‘s cabin. A quick check however found it locked. Why and where was he? There were a few rude remarks made about that! Cooking his books was probably the kindest one but if we weren't going to make it anyway that was surely a waste of effort!

The real problem though was the drinking water. As a steam turbine ship, the engineers later managed to take off some water from the Foster Wheeler boilers but not much and it tasted of steam, not a pleasant experience but not as diabolical as the taste of soup and bread made with sea water which the galley crew faithfully continued to provide!

The Old Man asked for a TTT to be sent. This advised other shipping that we were "concerned for safety of navigation and was of an urgent nature” - we were Not Under Control and obviously drifting. For long enough the ‘Oceanspan' transmitter kept tripping because of the solid sheets of water pouring over the radio room and the aerial outboard insulators, consequently it took quite a while to get this message off. There was no acknowledgment and come to think of it, I don’t remember hearing any one transmitting but that could be because of the horrendous static prevailing at the time.

Power was eventually restored in the engine room and we were then hove-to which eased the ship's motion in the water considerably, so although rolling, pitching and yawing was still the norm, at least it was under the OM's command and not just at the mercy of the seas! There was nothing else to do but sit it out and hope for an improvement in the weather. All the while each roll and lurch of the ship was punctuated by ominous bangs and rolling sounds coming from the holds.

Forty-eight hours later a patch in the Dutchman's breeks appeared, a fleeting glimpse of blue sky was seen before it disappeared again just as quickly, but it proved there was life out there and was welcomed as a harbinger. The patch of blue slowly grew bigger and things were getting back to normal. The chief officer sent the apprentices out to collect the fresh water casks from the smashed boat and that water was used to make tea and coffee for bridge crew, a bit brackish perhaps but welcome all that. It is no wonder fresh water is called sweet water

With a clearing sky the mates were taking sights and laying them off on the chart. It was no surprise to anyone that we were well out of our dead reckoning position but it turned out to be over 300 miles to the north west! However we were now back on track and it was full ahead for home.

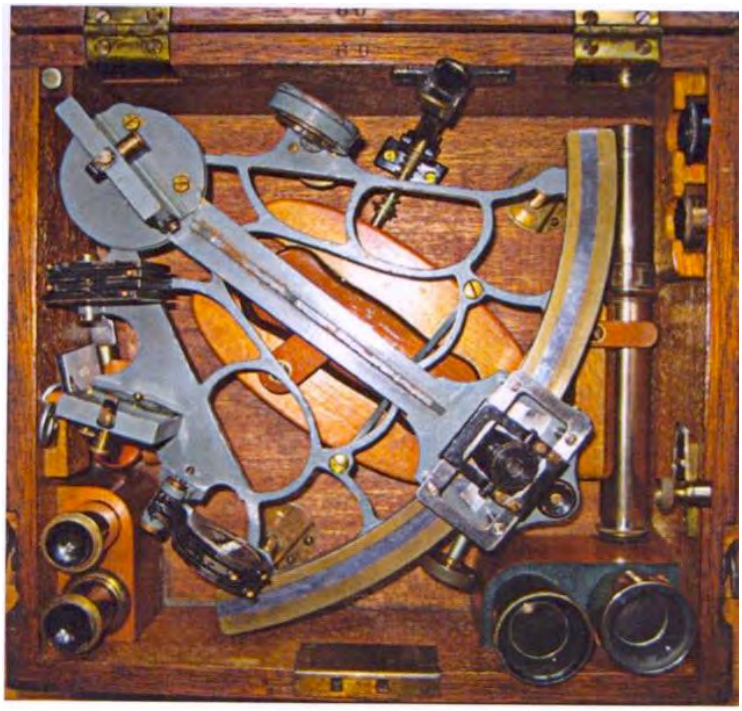
Like Masefield's dirty British coaster, we also had a salt-caked and rust streaked smoke stack. All in all we looked a bit of a mess! Not the usual Brocklebank arrival at Point Lynas.

As a postscript, when the cargo was being discharged, the originally neatly stowed rolls of steel plate were coming out of the hold like mangled watch springs! Quite a sight and a salutary reminder of the power of the sea, but also a tribute to the Clydeside shipbuilders and Brocklebank's attitude of not skimping on any of their builds.

Pre-war Japanese sextant by Tamaya

Robert Bruce-Chwatt

Following the article on the wartime Plath sextant this Japanese one by Tamaya was the result of a walk around the Los Angeles port area on a turn-round day in 1988 from mv **Sun Princess.** In the window of a local pawnbroker was an excellent sextant with the original box. On enquiry it was $120, but when informed that it would be rejoining a ship the price came down to $100, a bargain even if a hundred bucks was three and a bit P&0 passenger medical consultation fees at the time.



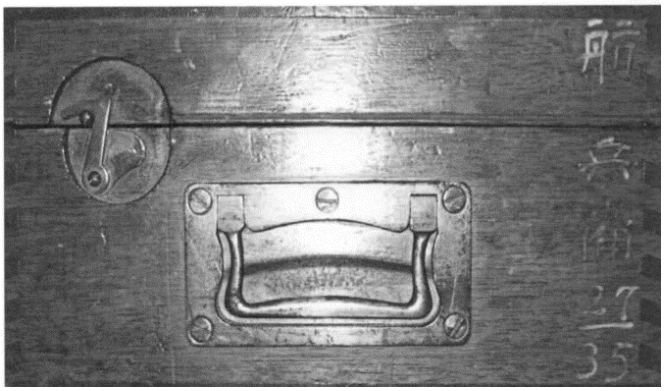
Taking photographs of the Plath were much easier as there were very few shiny parts; the curved polished brass of the Tamaya was a bit more of a struggle. Sextant 792 was produced at Tamaya's Aoyama factory in Tokyo and certified on April 10th of the 11th year of Showa, which is 1936. In Japan, years are dated from the reign of each Emperor, the Showa period began on December 25th 1926 with the accession of Emperor Hirohito. Showa, rather ironically in retrospect, it means: "Enlightened peace/ harmony" of which there was little between 1941 and 1945. The Showa period ended 63 years later with Hirohito's death, aged 88, on January 7th, 1989.

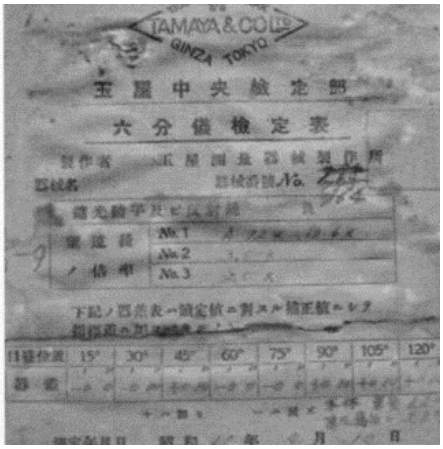
The Kanji characters read Tamaya & Co Ltd, Ginza, Tokyo

Further inquiries revealed that the factory area had been heavily bombed in World War II and the records of all Tamaya instruments were destroyed in the Great Yamanote Air Raid of May 26-26th 1945, a B29 fire bombing with 279 aircraft.

Aoyama was rebuilt after the war and is now one of the wealthiest areas of Tokyo, located in the North Western part of the Minato District.

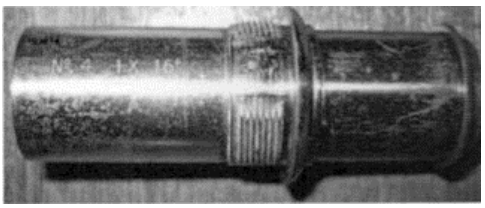
The sextant frame is bronze with what appears to be a bell-shaped motif, is painted "battleship grey“ and all the attachments to the frame are brass. The inlaid scale of the arc and the vernier scale are sterling silver, any cleaning risking damage by wear to the figures and lines, even if done carefully. There is a ground glass light diffuser set between the upper supports of the frame above the vernier to reduce reflection and it has a Ramsden eyepiece reader, the lenses both of focal length 45mm, the separation being 25mm, thus avoiding both chromatic and spherical aberration. The eyepiece can be slid to either side and pivots about the horizontal axis. The objective focuses at 15mm from the vernier and magnification is about 6 x.



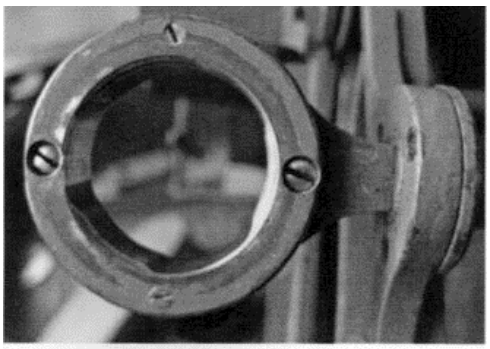


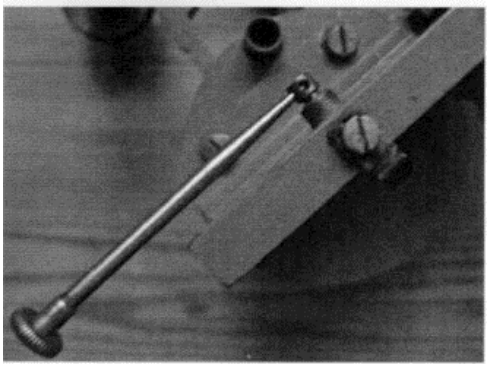
The characters on the right side of the wooden case read down as: Navigation Force Registered 27th (Instrument) out of 35. The telescopes and sighting tubes are secured to the clamp on the frame by an interrupted thread with three steps allowing for easy changing of the optics. The interrupted thread system is an ingenious mechanical device first used for the breech blocks of artillery pieces and was invented in 1845. This allowed the breech block to be inserted rapidly and fully into the breech and then securely engaged with as little as $^{1}/_{6}$ th of a turn and the increased speed allowed a much faster rate of fire compared with an uninterrupted breech thread. The earliest and simplest $^{1}/_{2}$ and $^{1}/_{2}$ step thread does mean that 50% of the seal is smooth and the threaded lands are at 180° to each other. The smooth area, whatever the number of lands, will of course always result in a 50% loss of thread-to-thread closure and the breech design required a very substantial thickness of block to compensate for this and prevent a mechanical failure and an

unwelcome explosive blow back. The later Axel Welin design of 1890 overcame this, the steps being cut in successively greater radii. This allowed a breech block of four steps to enable engaged threads over 80% of the circumference of the breech block. This allowed a shorter, lighter block and still only $^{1}/_{5}$ th of a turn to open or close it.



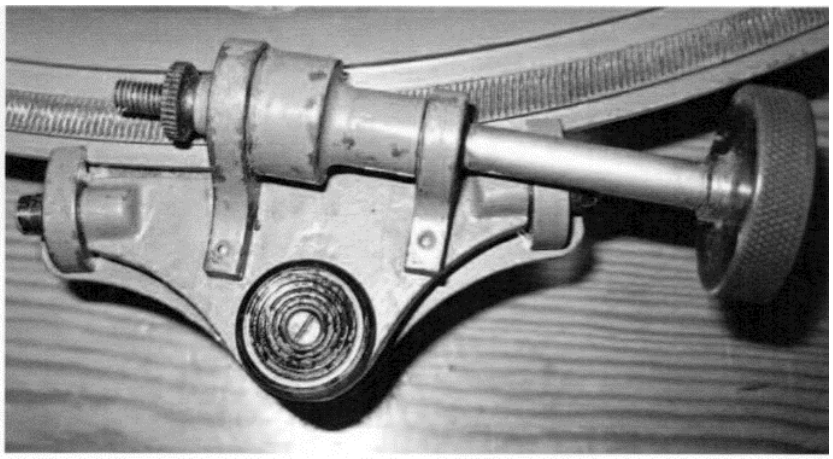
The telescope screw threads are cut in three sections to give a 120^{0} interruption of the lands requiring only a 1/4 turn or 90^{0} to lock it into the clamp. The telescope clamp also has adjusting screws to centralise it to the mirrors and the sun filters on a lateral plane. The adjustable insert to the clamp clearly shows the threaded lands at 7, 11 and 3 o'clock, with the flat grooves either side allowing for the fast locking system of an uninterrupted thread.





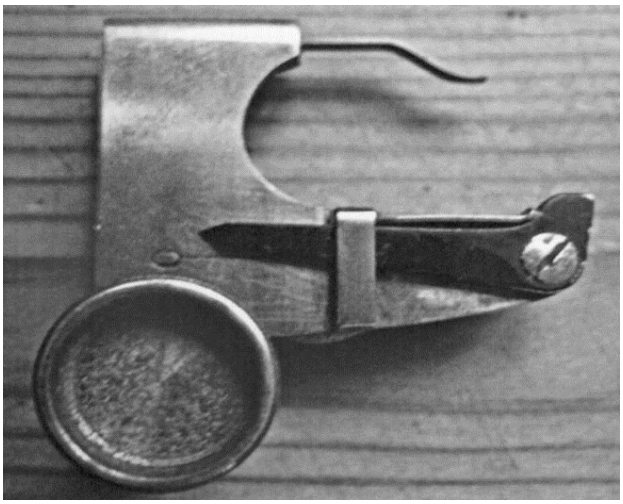
This sextant can be thus collimated; meaning the axis of the telescope can be adjusted so that it lies parallel to the plane of the arc. Most modern sextants do not have this feature as any error would not affect the result greatly. The rocking screws are always horizontal to allow for adjustment of angle about the vertical axis, moving on the pivot screws, which are like grub screws. They are factory adjusted and should not need to nor be fiddled with, though the temptation is there...

The collimator tube has two inserts: A is 12 x 4° with four cross wires in a box arrangement; the B is 6 x $4^{1}/_{2}$° with two parallel wires; both lens tubes invert the image. The Galilean telescope is engraved 3 - $2^{1}/_{2}$ x 9° and there is a single star tube engraved 4 - 1 x 15°. The former has an ocular lens 11mm in diameter and objective lens 30mm in diameter. The latter scope has of course no lenses and is in essence a pin-hole arrangement; the eye piece aperture is 3mm in diameter, the objective opening 13mm in diameter and the tube length is 80mm. Both telescopes are

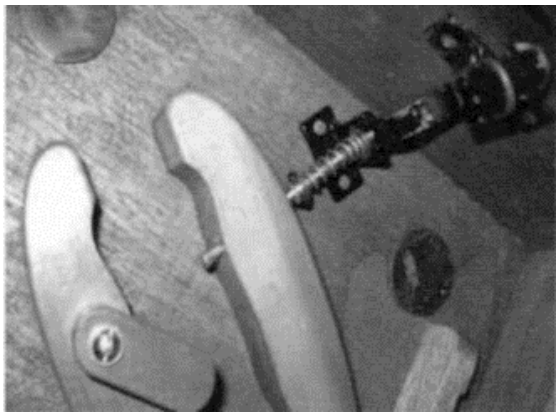


secured to the clamp on the frame by the previously mentioned interrupted thread allowing for easy changing of the telescopes.

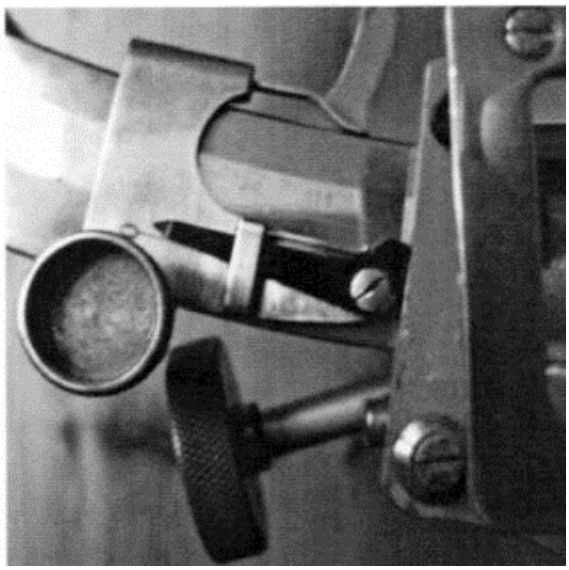
The mirrors are adjusted by the usual little screws; one in the lateral plane for the mirror of the index plate as it is movable in the sagittal plane, but in both planes for the partially silvered mirror of the horizon plate, as it is fixed. There is a threaded brass cup covering the head of the screw and a neat tapered steel and brass-headed pin to adjust them, the latter having a designated holder in the top left corner of the box. All very neat and very Japanese.



The micrometer screw has a simple circular worm and gear with a knurled brass thimble. The gearing is disengaged from the arm by squeezing the 'button' thus compressing the radial pre-load spring between the two plates, allowing the index arm to be moved freely either way along the full arc of the sextant.



The instrument is secured in the box by a sprung lever with a hinged pin sliding into a recess on the handle and is then further secured with a wooden arm pivoted over the handle. The three brass footplates for the sextant's legs are sprung; this is achieved by bending a dog-leg across them and then securing the smaller part to the box with two brass screws The attention to detail is notable and compared to other Tamaya sextants of the same era it is does seem to be rather top-of-the-range.



The puzzle, certainly to me, was the little brass attachment seen left, that fits over the arc from the left side. It was obviously some sort of zeroing device, but the absence of any scale other than the line zero does not allow for one to find accurately how far out the reading is either way. I had never come across one before. However, like all things beautifully designed and made, there is a

simple explanation and an email to the NMM provided the answer. It is a Greatest Angle clamp which was patented by George Wilson Heath around 1909 and is used to simplify the taking of a series of noon sun sights to determine latitude.

The principle is to take a series of sights as the sun approaches the meridian, which as it does so the altitude, and thus arc, increases, and the index arm gently slides the clip back up along the scale against the friction of the spring arm to a maximal position. As the sun passes the meridian, the altitude readings start to decrease and the index no longer impinges on the clip. The latter, held by its top spring, is then locked in position by the set screw and this will have recorded the maximum altitude, the moment of culmination. To take the reading after the sightings, the index arm is advanced until it just touches the back edge of the clip. This then gives the maximal noon reading, similar in a lateral thinking way to the magnetic capillary markers in the max-min thermometer of the ship's Stephenson screen. The Greater Angle clamp seen here has the refinement of a sprung zeroing pointer for even greater accuracy, hence the mid-line mark; Heath's patent was simple clamp. The main advantage of the clamp was removing the necessity of taking the sextant down to record each reading as the observer tracks the rise and then fall of the sun at noon.

The other great improvement by Heath & Co was the development around 1900 of a quick release device which replaced the clamping screw for the index arm, allowing the index to be moved freely, disengaging the threads of the screw by simply squeezing a lever. Further information about this company was sparse, but Heath and Co. of Erith in Kent was founded in 1845 by George Heath Snr, succeeded on his death in 1872 by his son George William Heath. By 1900 the firm was one of the major suppliers of nautical instruments and had adopted the trade name of "Hezzanith"; but was incorporated with William F. Stanley & Co of 286 High Holborn, London, WC1 in 1937.

Tamaya continues under its own name to this day as Tamaya Technics, the original name originating from the Japanese word “Tamaya”, (the "cornice of the Ghosts"), one of the altars of Shinto, dedicated to the memory of dead ancestors. Tamaya was said to have first been established in 1675, Tozaemon Tamaya's shop, *Tamaya Megane-ten*, only selling lenses for spectacles. It was very successful over the years and was the first Japanese company to import and sell navigational and surveying instruments from abroad. It applied for and was granted a license in 1894 to produce its own measuring instruments and by 1912 had developed it own transit and level. By 1901, it had been renamed as Tamaya Shoten and was importing surveying instruments. It was soon making levels and theodolites, and in 1922 made the very first sextant in Japan.

The Origins of the Bengal Pilot Service

by the late L.N.R.S. Vice President H.M. Hignett

THE Hooghly River is the westernmost branch of the Ganges Delta and economically the most important, being the principal waterway to that vast city and port, Calcutta. The river has always presented difficulties of navigation, with numerous sand-banks, constantly-shifting channels and a low, flat landscape which gives few marks by which the seaman can fix his position, making an efficient pilot service necessary. The Bengal Pilot Service filled this role. Until the Second World War, the service had an esteem that was the envy of most other pilot services. Entry was naturally difficult to attain, with strong competition for every vacancy, which, on appointment, brought a high income, excellent conditions of service and an aura of nobility. The Bengal pilots never deigned to converse with anyone below the rank of shipmaster, and only then with masters of the higher class of regular passenger liners.

But it was not always so. The beginnings were not so auspicious: they were, indeed, very humble beginnings and almost inextricably bound up with a British trading company which became the most powerful merchant company in the world. Known, in its later years, as the 'Honourable East India Company', it was formed by a group of merchant adventurers entering the race to exploit the riches of the south east Indies.

In 1498, Vasco da Gama sailed round the Cape of Good Hope and reached the Ganges Delta with the aid of an Arab pilot obtained from near Mombassa. The Portuguese navigator, the first European to reach the coast of India by sea gave the Portuguese a century-lead in trading to India. In 1599 a few English merchants obtained a charter issued to "The United Company of Merchant Adventurers Trading to the East Indies".

The Company did not at first enter the trade to India. Initially the Directors were out to buy the rich eastern spices, the ebony, camphor wood, silks, dyes, coral, ginger, pepper, and other exotic wares from Java. Demand for these in London brought astronomical prices, and huge profits for 'John Company' (as it was colloquially known). One ship, in 1611, a profit of almost 220 %. At the same time, the Dutch East India Company produced profits of almost 400% per voyage. The East India Company was controlled by a Governor and 24 Directors, all very experienced and competent businessmen. The Company did not own the ships it employed. In practice, the Directors built the ships to their own high standards and leased them to the Company for a number of voyages according to requirements. The East Indiamen, as the vessels were called, were built, equipped and manned to the highest standards of the day and indeed, set the standard. There was even an East India repair yard and stores at

Deptford, alongside the Trinity House, and most of the ships were built on the opposite bank of the Thames, at Blackwall, two miles downstream. The Captains of the East Indiamen were selected less for their sea-going experience than their ability to take charge of the largest ships of the time and handle the large complement of officers and crew. They were, in fact, commanders of expeditions, for apart from the natural dangers, fevers, pestilence, storms, shipwreck, there were the dangers of war and piracy. The captains were expected to take no chances in the handling of their ships and in addition to their pay, they could receive as much as 5% of the voyage profits to encourage safety. They could hardly be blamed for refusing to take chances on the Hooghly River.

In 1633, the Company established a trading post at Balasore, on the west side of the Bay of Bengal, some 60 miles from the entrance to the Hooghly River. Again, they were preceded by the Portuguese traders who first sailed up the river in 1537 and built a trading store there. The Dutch did not arrive in the area until 1645, but they quickly set up a pilot service for their own ships. The agent for 'John Company' wrote to London of the "need for trusty persons, to take charge of and navigate. . . and bee capable to pilot up shipps, as the Dutch doe". The presence of the competent Dutch pilots on the river may account for the greater profits made by the Dutch East India Company.

The British ships were compelled to anchor at Balasore, the cargoes being trans-shipped into smaller vessels sailing to and from Hooghly, the principal trading port of the Bengal region which was about 15 miles above the site of what is now Calcutta. There were Indian pilots working on the river but the captains refused their services, with justification, for the natives were unused to handling large, heavy vessels. Trans-shipment was costly, however, and there were the added losses from pilferage, piracy and shipwrecking along the river. The Directors offered inducements in the form of bonuses to the captains to take their ships up-river, but to no avail.

The Company, in 1651, commissioned the 70-ton sloop **Transport**, which, with English officers, successfully and safely carried the cargoes to and from Hooghly. Eventually the first East India Company trading-post on the river was established at Hooghly and the Directors renewed their efforts to persuade the captains to attempt the passage up river. A bonus of ten shillings per ton was offered for goods arriving at the English factory at Hooghly and the like amount for outward cargoes. The captains were not impressed, and in desperation the Directors ordered one of the two service vessels, the 80-ton pinnace **Diligence**, to take notice of the channel and depth of the Ganges and the entrances thereto, to keep a journal and to make exact drafts of their depths, reaches and currents and also mark how the sands vary". Again, the captains frustrated the Directors by demanding "able pylotts for the bringing of them in the river". This was not unreasonable. 'John Company' provided their vessels with a

qualified pilot, William Swanley, in the River Thames. Swanley conducted their vessels between Deptford and Gravesend and, in addition, acted as a form of marine superintendent. Swanley was one of the Elder Brethren of Trinity House, and if the captains were to have the best assistance in the Thames, why should they not have it in strange waters overseas.

'John Company' capitulated. In 1669, a letter to the factory managers at Balasore and Hooghly informed them,

> "*It is desired to have divers able persons instructed as pylotts for that service; the which the better to accomplish, let those that doe comaund the vessells up and down the river put all persons, from the youngest to the eldest, upon taking depths, sholdings, setting of tydes, currents, distances, buoyes and making drafts of the river, or what elce needful. . . And for a supply of young men to bee bred up, we have entertained as aprentizes for seven yeares, George Hieron (Herron), James White, Thomas Massen, James Ferborne, John Floyd and Thomas Bateman; the first three yeares at £6, the next two yeares at £7, and the last two yeares at £8 per annum, the whole to bee paid then by you for their provision of clothes.*"

There was also provision of a small vessel of 40/50 tons for their use.

These six apprentices were recruited from Dover and Deal, being boatmen and mariners who were unable to obtain timely entrance into the important and well-established Fellowship of Lodemanage of the Cinque Ports based at Dover. This can be regarded as the foundation of the Bengal Pilot Service.

Towards the end of the same year the **Diligence** and the **Madras** were considered for the 'discovery of the river', but only one vessel could be used. The **Diligence** was unsuitable and 'there not being men sufficient to man both'. Not only was the **Diligence** unsuitable for survey work, but being almost 20 years old was not suitable for cargo-carrying either. Likewise, the **Madras**, commanded by William Walters, their only capable pilot, was also unsuitable. Both vessels had defective steering and sailing qualities and, grounding repeatedly, they were often in danger of being overturned by the strong, swift tidal currents.

But there were other problems too, as the Agent wrote to London, "We did in our last informe you of the improppernes of our pilots would frustrate our desires of the rivers through discovery; and therefore wee cannot omit repeating our request that, if possible, you will procure us one or two that may perfect the work; for of those four mariners arryved by these ships, two of them are too hebede (stupid and obtuse) and dull for pilots and the others too young to be entrusted with the charge of a sloop, much less a ship, for some yeares."

An early chart of the Hooghly

In 1670, William Bramston, who was said to have 'an indifferent knowledge already of the river', was given the charge of the **Madras***;* Walters being transferred to the **Diligence***.* This was part of a planned reorganisation to secure the passage of the English ships up the river to Hooghly. Branston and Walters were assured of £10 for every ship they 'shall carry up above the lle of Cox (near the present Calcutta) and to mediate with your lordships for an augmentation of their sallerys'. The agent further suggested that if the captains refused to obey orders to sail up the river with the appointed pilots, the Company must provide its own ships, whose captains would be left with no alternative.

The situation remained difficult for, in August, 1670, both Walters and Branston died. Samuel Hacon, who had had some training and gained experience of pilotage from the retiring Portuguese pilots, was appointed to command the **Diligence***.* The Agent, now at Hooghly, wrote to the Directors 'to send out three or four seamen with their families, for otherwise no sooner had they got experience of the river, than they wanted to return home'.

'John Company' arranged for 'six greate cann boyes with chaines and millstones to ride them by' to mark the channels. But they remained adamant in their refusals to attempt the passage up the river. They wanted indemnity against displacement of the buoys. In this demand they were not unreasonable; the Dutch had lost one ship in five in the preceding three years.

Finally, in August, 1672, Samuel Hacon persuaded Captain James Marriner of the **Rebecca** (200 tons), to attempt the 80 miles passage up to Hooghly. The persuasion was aided by a bonus for Marriner of 20s. 8d. per ton of cargo. The inward and outward trips were safely accomplished; the inward passage being particularly difficult due to heavy downstream fresh-water currents. Hacon received 100 rupees (£12.50) for this historic passage. The **Diligence** (Henry Droyne, master) sailed ahead of the **Rebecca** to sound the channels.

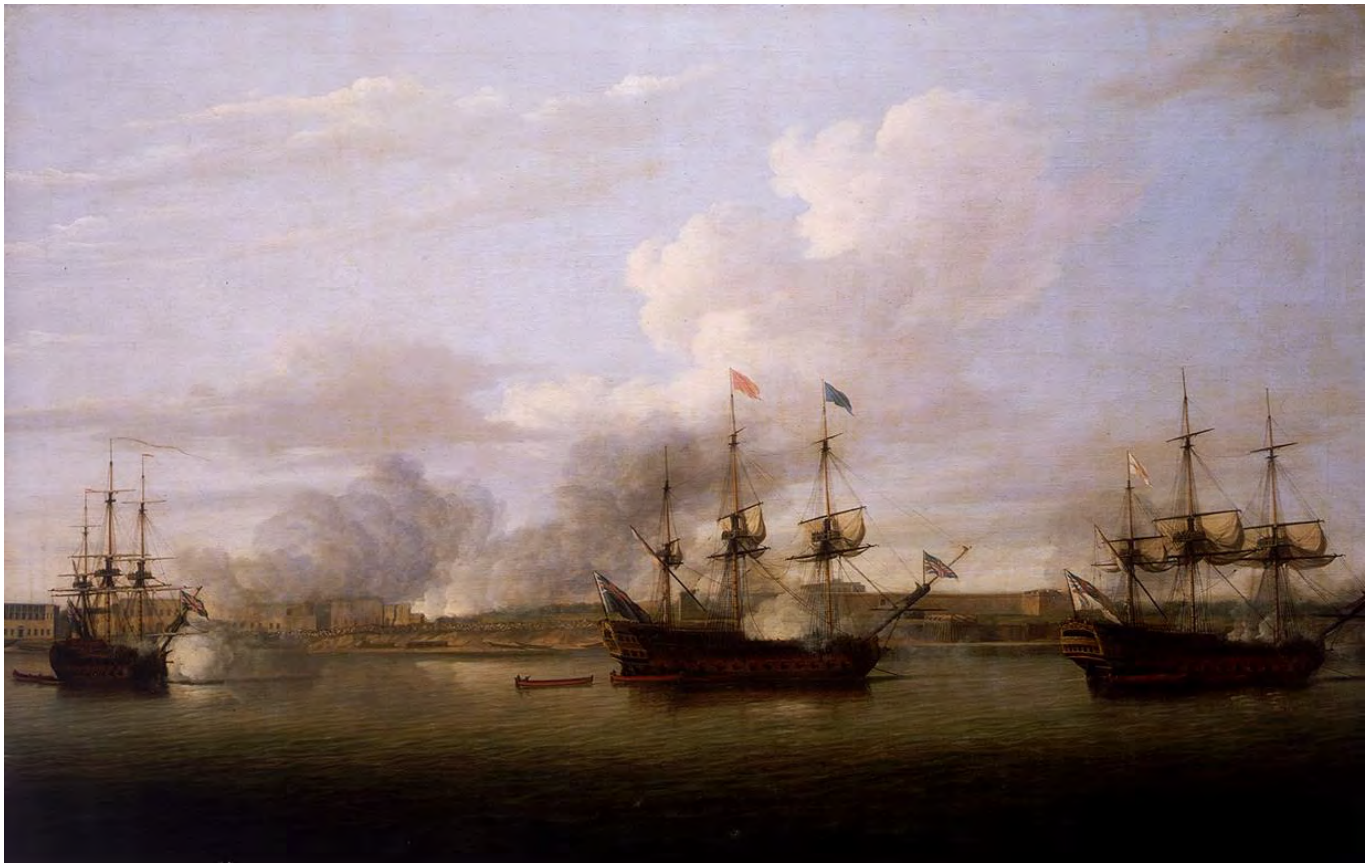
By 1674 there were five service vessels, lightening the incoming ships, loading the outgoing ones, escorting the same ships up and down the river. John Bugden, John Nicholson, Henry Divine, William Lux, George Herron and William Bateman were all named as masters of the sloops or as pilots. Henry Divine was singled out as being 'given much to drink', and on at least one occasion John Nicholson had to relieve him. The service vessels were also used as training vessels for the prospective pilots.

In general, the climate and environment was not a healthy one. Ships, arriving from all parts of the world, bringing pestilence, were a constant source of danger, and the pilots were often the first to board such ships. There was indeed, a heavy mortality among the masters of the sloops and the pilots. Two died within a month of each other in the autumn of 1675. 'John Company' tried to maintain the supply of pilots, for in 1678, they sent 10 youths to 'be bred as pilots'. Sons of the Company's seamen, they had been educated in the Company's Hospital School in the east end of London. After a long and difficult voyage, they arrived at Hooghly, sickly and very weak. Five died before the year's end.

George Herron, one of the original group of men brought out from the Cinque Ports, survived to become senior pilot. He appears to have been a very capable person, being credited as having produced the first chart of the Ganges Delta. In 1679, he piloted the largest ship, the **Falcon** (400 tons), up to Hooghly and back to sea. This was the breakthrough the Company sought. The Bengal Pilot service was a viable service.

Within a century, the Directors of the East India Company were able to bestow appointments to the service on sons of relatives and friends as well as business acquaintances. The applicants were not deterred by the long period of training in an unhealthy climate nor by the danger of shipwreck and drowning in the typhoons which occasionally sweep the region. From the attraction to the service of men of exceptionally high quality evolved an extraordinarily efficient and reliable service.

[*Editor's note: As a Brocklebank Line engineer in the 1950s/60s when making the hazardous 120 mile passage from the anchorage at Sandheads to Calcutta I often pondered on what size of sailing ship could make the same run without any tugs to assist. The above article indicates that in the early days it was the practice to trans-ship cargo and passengers to smaller local boats. An early reference to specific ships in the upper reaches of the Hooghly is in the battle for the French occupied fortified riverside town of Chandannager (some 30 miles north of Calcutta. A force of Royal Navy ships bombarded the town from the river. The ships involved were H.M.S.* ***Kent*** *(1746, 64 guns with a length of 154ft.), H.M.S.* ***Tiger*** *(1747, 60 guns with a length of 151ft.) and H.M.S. Salisbury (1746, 50 guns with a length of 140ft.). These are significantly sized ships for such a difficult river passage! This painting of the attack is reproduced by courtesy of Wikimedia and is by the French born artist Dominic Serres RA (1722–1793)]*



A Norwegian Voyage with Hurtigruten

By LNRS Vice-Chairman John Stokoe

Of just 90 minutes duration our flight was soon over. Leaving a damp Manchester, we have enjoyed a smooth journey over Northern England and the North Sea courtesy of Jet2 and of course Hurtigruten. Our plane is full with mainly happy and smiling passengers looking forward to the rich experience that now lay ahead. Landing at Bergen Airport we are met by a convoy of coaches hired specifically to take us to the Hurtigruten Terminal close to the city centre. This journey of around 12 miles was accompanied by interesting commentary from our coach guide who on numerous occasions forewarns us of the high cost of living we would need to come to terms with whilst in Norway.

With our cabin base on the m/s **Richard With** firmly established, and recalling our earlier tedious queue for customs and immigration, it is time to join yet another queue, but much more worthwhile as this time as we move steadily forward towards a sumptuous buffet dinner spread for which Hurtigruten are renowned.

Departing from Bergen later in the evening we see little if any of our first port of call Flora which is visited at 0300 hours next morning. The ship is gradually coming to life at that early hour when we suddenly realise that for all our berthing over the next eleven days we would be port side to with metal gangways and cargo ramps to clang a few decks immediately below us.

Our ship maintains a tight schedule and with a further four stops eventually giving us the opportunity to step ashore at Alesund. Following our departure most of the 400 or so passengers take to the lounges for a full afternoon of relaxation as **Richard With** is carefully navigated through countless narrow fjords, the scenery reminiscent of what we had previously enjoyed in New Zealand. Thence onward through a continuous range of snow-tipped mountains as we head further northwards in our quest known as ''Hunting The Lights''.

Catering staff offer a set meal each evening. The full twelve day set of menus are given interesting descriptions in a readily available quality brochure. This first meal sets the example of what we hope will be continued throughout our trip. Early indications are that our expectations could quite well be exceeded.

An alarm call is needed to herald in day three with an early breakfast essential paving the way for a morning tour of Trondheim by coach. This new knowledgeable guide provides commentary in both French and English, once again dwelling considerably on the Norwegian wealth factor. We are ushered around Niardos Cathedral which has stood on the same spot for some 1100 years although rebuilding of almost all of the structure is readily admitted. Our coach then winds an intricate

route through most of the city with a further highlight being a stunning panoramic view generated from a high level promontory point from where we are able to take in the complete city vista.

Lunch is preceded by an outline summary of all available excursions during the northbound leg of our trip. Whether our selection from the many on offer will prove that best decisions have been taken remains to be seen. Leaving Trondheim, we now have an 8 hour sea passage to our next port Stokksundet.

Clearly a busy night for the ship's crew with three overnight stops which we didn't see or for that matter hear anything. It has now become customary to open our cabin curtains knowing that more scenic delights await the start of each day and day 4 is no exception to this. Snow-capped peaks are abundant both to port and starboard – the big question is which should we focus our attention on? At breakfast time whilst in conversation, a fellow passenger close by enquires as to which part of Liverpool I come from. Is my accent really that pronounced?

Mid-morning sees a whistle-stop call into Rorvik and very quickly we are on our way once again. A globe shaped monument atop a small islet passing to port announces our entry into the Arctic Circle. What this leads to an hour or so later can send shivers down one's spine. The arrival of King Neptune attracts most passengers aft to Deck 7. Each and all are 'treated' to an ice-cube being critically aimed down our necks dispensed either by Neptune himself or the ship's captain. There are however rewards to be found with some warming punch and a certificate to mark this special occasion. Despite this chilling experience a good time is nevertheless had by all.

The opportunity for a further stroll ashore comes with our arrival at Bodo. All around, the snow lies to a depth of 9 or 10 inches but the roads and pavements are relatively clear enabling an accident free jaunt through this busy little town. A video records our departure from Bodo and in just a few hours time we shall be entertained to a Viking Feast at our next stop, Stamsund on the Lofoton Islands. On arrival and with haste we are coached to the Viking Museum, a journey of around a half hour through total darkness. Our Tour Leader this time is Christian bedecked in his vibrant Viking cloak. He is extremely competent and knowledgeable and the whole journey is taken up with English/German commentary as to some background Viking history. Our own highlight on this particular journey is to see in the windows of each and every

passing house a shining light. We enquire of the guide what tradition is being applied to this quant local custom and his answer is that as it is so dark in this area, particularly during the winter months, the window lights helped residents to find their front doors. However it turns out that this was more likely a local tradition going back hundreds of years with the aim assisting fishermen returning from the sea to their homes.

The feast itself combined chanting and numerous toasts to the Gods – we lose track of how many times we shout '*skol* 'whilst taking another slurp of the mead-based drink. And to cap it all, my plate of food goes cold far too quickly for my liking Mr Viking! It then takes a further hour of coach travel to return us safely to our ship. It is time to 'Hunt the Lights' with most passengers gathering on deck hopeful for even just one brief magical glimpse… but we are to be disappointed on this occasion.

Day five opens with our departure from Forsness. There have in fact been yet another three ports of call during the night-time but we remain oblivious to it all. Shortly after breakfast we are introduced to the history of Tromso courtesy of a fascinating slide show touching on the city's status as the Gateway to the Arctic. It also draws attention to some of the exploits of the famous local adventurer Roald Amundsen……..although he had in fact been born in Oslo.

Our post-lunch excursion took us to the Wilderness Centre. This includes a panoramic 'wrap-around' film show projected onto five linked screens very effectively introducing endless examples of the wildlife around the Svalberg district.

The Centre also hosts a company of sea-lions that amaze and amuse visitors with a programme of special 'party tricks' associated with these mammals. The audience is enthralled with their antics and many megapixels of camera memory cards are consumed throughout this performance. Then, with a backdrop of magnificent scenery we tour this delightful city concluding the afternoon by visiting the rather modern but extremely striking Arctic Cathedral and whilst there a candle is lit in memory of our late dear daughter.

The approach of night-time enables us to see an illuminated Tromso from our ship with the bright city lights being duplicated through almost perfect reflections in the fjord. So we have at last found some lights that excite…….. but would we have even greater success with our main mission to witness the Aurora Borealis? With evening dinner concluded and our customary move to the lounge/bar, no sooner had we settled when the cry 'The Lights' resounds throughout the ship. Movement is swift, passengers rushing to equip themselves with warm clothing and their treasured cameras. And then the vigil begins. Many passengers are clustered on the after part of Deck 7 clutching their recording technology, tripods and suchlike hoping that their hunt for the lights will conclude successfully as the night progresses. Once eyes are accustomed to the darkness, we train them on some lighter patches that are visible

in the starlit sky. However, most noticeable was the flashing lights of an overhead aircraft which there is every likelihood would be tracking and chasing the phenomenon at much closer range than ourselves. An hour of 'coldness' passes slowly and, with little if any vivid change to the sky, passengers gradually peel off to the vessel's warm interior.

Slight pink and green smudges are discernible on my small digital camera screen but the benchmark images that had previously been set by Joanna Lumley's documentary have not been achieved. There will always be another night…. and another…….

The first of this day's ports of call is the typical Norwegian fishing village Havoysund. Forklift trucks operate like worker bees extracting cargo which would be the lifeblood of existence for this isolated community, well at least until the next Hurtigruten vessel which would berth… exactly 24 hours later. Our next stopover is eagerly awaited by most passengers as a convoy of five coaches has been assigned to convey us to North Cape – the most northerly point of Europe. Deep, crisp and sparkling snow offer a bleak but fresh clean landscape and in single file formation we are preceded by a large snow plough/blower to ensure that our journey would be unimpeded by encroaching snowdrifts.

North Cape is remote but is set amidst beautiful isolation. We have yet another glorious cloudless day so we cannot be more fortunate. Our Tour Guide this time is Trevor. Not a very Norwegian name primarily because he is English having spent his early years as a trawlerman sailing out of Hull. However, having met and married a Norwegian girl he decided to settle in this pretty area. In all this time he has not shaken off a quite pronounced Yorkshire accent. North Cape is certainly a highlight during our overall journey, memorable for so many reasons, one of which was the absolute biting cold which numbs one's fingers we can probably recall from those days when we were at school!

During the afternoon, and having returned to **Richard With,** we are again under way and without any need for us to slow down we are approached by an extremely fast motor boat skippered by a local fisherman who every day at about this time sells his main catch to passing Hurtigruten chefs – the prime catch being fresh live king crabs. Not only does he deliver these but he also takes time out on board to explain the origins of these crustaceans to interested passengers and our recollection of this event is when we hold up one of these crabs to be photographed.

It is now Friday (which by the way took some careful calculating) and it means that during the morning we reach the halfway point of our cruise and time to turn around and head back towards Bergen……but not too soon. On arrival at Kirkenes (now let's try pronouncing this correctly – Shickeeness - we are advised to say it 'with a smile') and passengers are beginning to queue for a whole variety of excursions. We

are in fact spoilt for choice between taking a husky ride, visiting the Russian border or, the one we did choose, visiting an Ice Hotel.
With a temperature which had plummeted to -31 degrees during the night we must first steam through a mass of pure unbroken ice covering the whole fjord in our approach to Kirkenes replicating the role of a true ice-breaker. Photography of this proves to be rather difficult due to the chill factor on deck allowing mere minutes of exposure before fingers and hands reach beyond their limit of operation.

And so to the Ice Hotel which is a mere 10 minutes or so out of town. A set temperature of -4 degrees ensures that the delicate ice carvings which decorate each bedroom are preserved intact throughout the winter season offering a source of considerable interest and amusement. This is followed by a photo-shoot with some small reindeer attracting an 'aahh' factor then a much needed warming fruit drink accompanied by…….reindeer sausage. At this same location our friends have been enjoying their husky driven sledge-ride whilst we are able to visit those dogs that are not 'on duty' that day. With clearly well in excess of 100 kennels, all clearly marked with each husky's name, they are quite placid at meeting total strangers such as ourselves – in fact they lap up the attention given to them.

Our excursion concludes with the coach taking us to a high vantage point offering a panoramic vista of the whole of Kirkenes and clear sight of our ship m/s **Richard With** which is berthed at the Hurtigruten Terminal. On departure, and whilst we enjoy our lunch, we again tackle many kilometres of sheet ice which is easily being crushed by our ship.

Within hours we have arrived at Vardo for a brief call. A handful of passengers have responded to the call by volunteering to take a dip in the ice-cold Barents Sea which must have taken considerable courage. We all watch from a distance just imagining the chill that these swimmers must be experiencing albeit very briefly.

Some 20 minutes on deck at around midnight was rewarded with some faint images of 'The Lights'. One is not able to forecast whether these will fade or intensify. I had opted for the former accepting that those diehard co-travellers who persevere much longer might be richly rewarded but the clock had moved on to 2 and 3 a.m. and a good night's sleep beckons.

There are a couple of short stops immediately before breakfast and the passing Hurtigruten steamer **Trollsfjord** which attracted many photographers. Our main call today was at Hammerfest listed as the most northerly town in the world and a welcome opportunity to wander ashore. The ground is snowy and icy and much care is needed at all times. The Tourist Information Centre incorporates a Polar Bear Society Museum. Our walk around town presents a demonstration of what we had previously heard about. Parked vehicles were being left with keys in their ignition with

engines kept running thus keeping these cars warm until their owners return from shopping. Could we try this in the UK? - I doubt it very much!

We now continue our southbound passage calling at small ports previously unseen when visited at night-time whilst we were northbound. A rather late night awaits us as we shall be joining with many other passengers for a Midnight Musical Concert to be held in the Tromso Arctic Cathedral. Three very talented musicians were to delight our midnight hour with a well-chosen selection of Norwegian classical and traditional folk tunes. A soprano, a flautist and pianist complement each other with such haunting sounds. A highlight of our trip - most certainly - and exceeding expectations by a large margin.

We had always known that this was likely to be a rather grueling phase of our voyage. With no more than four hours sleep available after our concert, an alarm call is necessary to prepare us for our tour of some of the Lofoton Islands. With a 7 o'clock breakfast behind us we board the available coach. The town of Harstad seems very quiet indeed. Our guide points out a number of junior and secondary schools at which no sign of life is apparent until at last we twig…. it is Sunday morning.

Perhaps some of the magic of these islands is lost with it being rather overcast. The sky is grey, the mountains are grey and of course so are the fjords that surround us. Our excursion also takes in a local ferry trip conveying us and our coach between two islands. Whilst away from **Richard With**, our temporary home, the ship is now steaming to its next port of call at which we are scheduled to re-join her. The coach crosses over a typical fjord bridge exactly synchronised with **Richard With** steaming beneath us. The ship salutes us with the customary three long blasts and our coach driver reciprocates this courtesy with the coach horn. A moving moment!

We steam through the fjords during these final few days whilst our ship maintains what is clearly a quartz-timed schedule. There is rarely a vacant seat in the panorama lounge. The list of ports that still remain to be visited is unfortunately rapidly dwindling. Those that were scheduled for night-time visits during our voyage north are now being seen afresh by day when steaming southbound. Apart from the continuous wonderful scenery there are probably few sights remaining before we berth at Bergen so this is regarded in the trade as 'a relaxing day at sea' and we can almost count the hours until our arrival. We receive our instructions for leaving the **Richard With.** Cases will need to be packed and we need to be clear of our cabin by mid-morning the next day. Noticing what is happening to cabins already vacated, the stewards are already extremely thorough in their preparations for the next group of passengers. It is quite evident that all our fellow passengers, including those many new friends that we have made during these recent weeks, will be joining us in reflecting on the wonderful experience that our cruise has generated with lasting indelibly imprinted memories to savour in the weeks and months ahead.

Why Does the Royal Navy Remember Nelson Above Others

Captain Hugh Daglish R.N. Rtd.

Why does the Royal Navy remember Vice Admiral Lord Nelson on Trafalgar Day, 21 October, usually with a dinner, a speech about him and a toast to the 'Immortal Memory' a phrase coined by his second in command after the battle? Why not any number of other gallant, intelligent, resourceful and successful officers in the illustrious 1200-year history of the Royal Navy?

To answer this may I first look back to his own time. To contemporaries Nelson was a brilliant naval officer. Bonaparte had swept all before him, until the Battle of the Nile, where in a bold action Nelson inflicted the first defeat over his forces. From then, the whole British people had lionized Nelson, and some 45 portraits of him were painted over the 7 years leading to Trafalgar — more than any other national hero. At Copenhagen his squadron was inshore fighting the forts when he was ordered to withdraw by his cautious commander, Admiral Hyde Parker, who was offshore; upon which he put his telescope to his blind eye and said 'I see no signal' and continued the action to victory.

So, he was already hero before Trafalgar; then his final achievement of victory at Trafalgar saved Britain from invasion and was essential to the eventual defeat of the much feared tyrant, Napoleon Bonaparte; and of course he died a hero's death.

Huge national relief at the news of victory at Trafalgar was overshadowed by a deep sense of loss at his death which spread right across the empire at astonishing speed. The King who had snubbed Nelson over rumours of his affair was so shocked he remained silent for some 5 minutes before going to St George's Chapel.

When Nelson's body arrived at Greenwich, the Princess of Wales was the first mourner followed by some 300,000 people, more than the population of London, causing the Governor, Admiral Hood, to ask for extra troops. His state funeral was as large and ornate as a Royal funeral.

Of course, his officers and sailors knew him better than the British public and their loss was greater. Immediately after the battle Sir Edward Berry, the Captain of HMS **Agamemnon** went onboard Nelson's flagship, HMS **Victory**, fearing for his admiral and later returned to his ship weeping. Nelson's 2nd in command Admiral Collingwood began his official dispatch not with the victory but words of loss.

"*The ever-to-be-lamented death of Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson who in the late conflict with the enemy fell in the hour of victory*...."

The men of the Fleet wept when the news spread. Remember that these were men hardened not just to the usual very tough conditions at sea year after year, but also to terrible wounding, death and bloodshed — there was greater firepower in one ship of the line than in all of Wellington's artillery at Waterloo — **Santissima Trinidad**, the largest of 33 ships of the line facing Nelson's fleet had 136 guns and they were fired at point blank range. Battle was bloody, fierce, deafening and terrifying. They had to be very tough men.

Victory's sailors insisted on bringing his body home in their patched-up limping ship, in winter, rather than let someone else do it; and they stayed with the coffin to the interment whatever anyone else had in mind.

Why this adulation at the time? He was a hero who was a shining example of a leader and a selfless defender of our country, but also (and I think this matters) a flawed human being. We can relate to such a man and admire his strengths all the more. So let me describe him a little and see if you can see why he was such a hero to his men and then to their successors.

He was irritable from bouts of illness and pain arising from malaria and scurvy which he suffered most of his life and from his wounds.

He lost the sight of his right eye storming ashore at Calvi when a landing canon ball threw gravel into it; his right elbow was shattered by a musket ball when, again leaping ashore at the head of an assault at Santa Cruz, and the amputation caused him pain for many months.

He suffered a head wound at the Battle of the Nile which caused dizziness and headaches for a long time, made worse by the strain on his remaining eye, when writing, of which he did a very great deal, on one recorded occasion for 7 hours.

Yet he continued to be brave, despite the pain and the maiming bravery had cost him. His courage in the face of his own infirmities and in action was immense and inspiring.

His adultery with Emma Hamilton was infamous. This and his cuckolding of his staunchest supporter and friend, Sir William Hamilton, depressed him - he felt guilty and it threatened his reputation, but his love for Emma and yearning for her when away at sea was more important, and is something sailors understand very well.

Yet he also coped with that longing and he subordinated his passion to his duty, spending 2 years at sea without seeing her, then a few days with her, before returning to his fleet for what was to be Trafalgar.

Nelson's frailties and his refusal to succumb to them would have endeared him the more to his men; and his weaknesses might have given him a sensibility towards his men which healthy, strong and righteous men don't always have — Wellington, a great general, described his soldiers as scum!

Some describe him as vain —I reject that utterly. Nelson sought glory, of course he did, it is just a Georgian word for reputation, respect, the reward for all the discomfort and peril year after year at sea. When he was knighted the King exclaimed "You have lost your right arm!" Nelson replied "But not my right hand, sir, as I have the honour of presenting Captain Berry." Is that the behaviour of a vain man? No

After Trafalgar, his chaplain, Alexander Scott wrote to Emma, "When I think, setting aside his heroism, what an affectionate, fascinating little fellow he was, how dignified and pure his mind, how kind and condescending (meaning considerate to subordinates, not patronizing as now) ....how kind and condescending his manner, I become stupid with grief for what I have lost." He knew Nelson well and he was not describing a vain man.

There are many stories of his condescension, his consideration for his people; here is one. Before Trafalgar, a ship was despatched with mail for England. Just after she had moved away, he noticed a petty officer who had been loading the mail looked forlorn. He asked him why and the man said he had not sent a letter to his wife. Nelson immediately recalled the ship so the man could write a letter and get it away saying "Who knows, we may have action next week and he may die
Nelson's men said of him, "Our Nel is as brave as a lion and as gentle as a lamb."

He was incapable of caprice or tyranny and they obeyed him gladly. The sailors and marines across the whole fleet wept at the news of his death because in a cruel age and a dangerous, tough way of life, he was a humane and caring man; and of course he was a highly successful commander which is certainly the kind you want to have. No-one wants to follow a failure especially when life and limb are at risk.

Nelson knew how to inspire confidence in his men apart from confidence from his reputation. Before Trafalgar the French and Spanish Fleet was sighted at dawn, but the winds were light and so they could only close very slowly not reaching canon range until noon. He had several hours to wait. He must have been nervous but this is what he did.

He composed himself writing a codicil to his will (so he expected to be at mortal risk) and his famous last prayer which reveals much about his character.

May the great God whom I worship, grant to my country [you notice he did not say 'to me'], grant to my country and for the benefit of Europe in general a great and glorious victory: and may no misconduct in anyone tarnish it; and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British fleet. For myself individually, I commit my life to Him who made me and may His blessing light upon my endeavours for serving my country faithfully. To Him I resign myself and the just cause which is entrusted to me to defend.
Amen. Amen. Amen.

He then walked **Victory's** 3 gun decks giving courage to his sailors and marines. He came on deck and said to his flag lieutenant, Pascoe "I'll now occupy the minds of the Fleet [because he knew they would be tense] with a signal," the famous England Expects that every man will do his duty. Actually, he wanted to send Nelson confides, that is to say is confident, that every man will do his duty which would have been better, but Pascoe suggested England expects because it would require fewer flags to be hoisted and be quicker.

And then he dressed in his full uniform in all it finery for the battle, showing his defiance to all around him. All this was calculated to inspire his men to great courage and confidence of success.

His confidence was neither false nor superficial. He had prepared his fleet well. The British Fleet blockaded the French and Spanish in their ports for two years - until a storm blew the blockading ships off station allowing the French to escape. During that long blockade the Royal Navy men-of- war had remained close enough to their harbour mouths to ensure the enemy and the citizens could see them. This

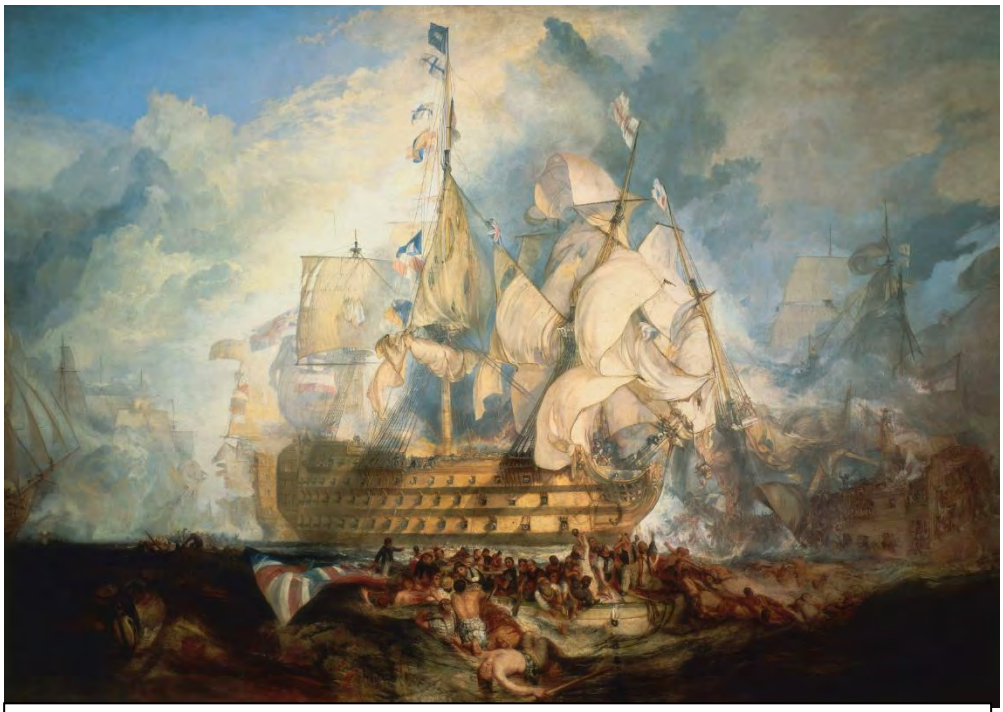
required sharp seamanship, especially in winter gales, to avoid running onto rocks or coming within range of shore batteries. They also practised their gunnery at sea.

The enemy, stuck in their harbours, in contrast had no such honing of their seamanship and gunnery which were so vital in battle.

So the British fleet was much more competent and everyone knew it a real advantage and a psychological one. Nelson had seen to it that his fleet was better prepared.

Then we see another Nelsonian trait: daring. Instead of using his advantage to fight a conventional battle more efficiently, he chose higher risk tactics, in order not just to win, but to win decisively.

Conventionally naval battles were fought by forming up the opposing fleets in two parallel lines so ships were paired off and could slug it out with canon before boarding and taking their opponent. At Trafalgar, Nelson put his fleet into two parallel lines which would attack at right angles, one at the middle of the enemy line and the other attacking towards the rear of the enemy tine, cutting them into three.



The Battle of Trafalgar by J.M.W. Turner
Courtesy Wikimedia and National Maritime Museum

HMS **Victory** led one line and HMS **Royal Sovereign** the other. Despite the light winds which slowed their approach and increased **Victory**'s and **Royal Sovereign**'s exposure to fire for almost an hour before their own broadsides could fire, he persisted with the plan, and indeed these ships suffered grievously.

But he calculated correctly that the enemy gunnery would be less accurate and slower— in the event reloads in the British ships were three times faster. So the tactic caused chaos in the enemy and the battle was won crushingly— 22 ships of the line were taken - a vital success which meant Napoleon could never again threaten invasion of Britain.

Well before the battle was won, Nelson was shot from the mizzentop of the **Redoubtable** with a musket ball which travelled through his lung to shatter his spine. When Sergeant Secker of the Royal Marines carried the mortally wounded Nelson

from his quarterdeck, the British Fleet lost none of its momentum, because the captains all knew what to do and the manner in which to do it: boldly - one of Nelson's dictums was 'No captain can do very wrong if he places his ship alongside the enemy'.

It had been Nelson's innovation to summon his captains together to explain his plans and his thinking. They were talented and resolute officers: Nelson called them the Band of Brothers, a phrase he took from Henry V and first used in his fleet at the Battle of the Nile. They, not Nelson, carried the plan through to overwhelming victory.

In the mayhem of battle they knew what he wanted and how to use their initiative. When Collingwood had seen the "England expects" signal flags being hoisted that morning he remarked "I don't know why Nelson is signalling, we all know what to do": knowing the plan he was surprised to see what he thought were new orders.

The battle was won before he died and when the dying admiral was told of the victory he was heard to say "Thank God I have done my duty."

This is an inspiring story and the Royal Navy reminds itself of Nelson's qualities on Trafalgar Night because they exemplify the finest; and we make the toast to "the immortal memory", the phrase coined by Collingwood. This isn't just to keep us in touch with our history but with what became the very spirit of our Service — the Nelson Touch.

We saw the Nelson Touch in the Second World War in the brave Fleet Air Arm Swordfish bi-plane attack on the Italian fleet at Taranto; in the Mediterranean actions of Lieutenant Commander David Wanklyn VC, DSO and 2 bars in HM Submarine **Upholder**, later lost in action; in the ingenuity of Captain Johnny Walker DSO and 3 bars, against the Atlantic U-boats — he too died on the brink of victory; in Admiral Cunningham's aggressive action at Matapan, defying the caution of his staff. In Admiral Fraser who commanded the Home Fleet and later the British Pacific Fleet and was loved by officers and men. In the many commanders who used signals to fortify and amuse when danger loomed. These were pieces of Nelson, he was their example; and they in turn were all successful, usually against the odds; again preventing a tyrant from invading and helping Europe defeat him.

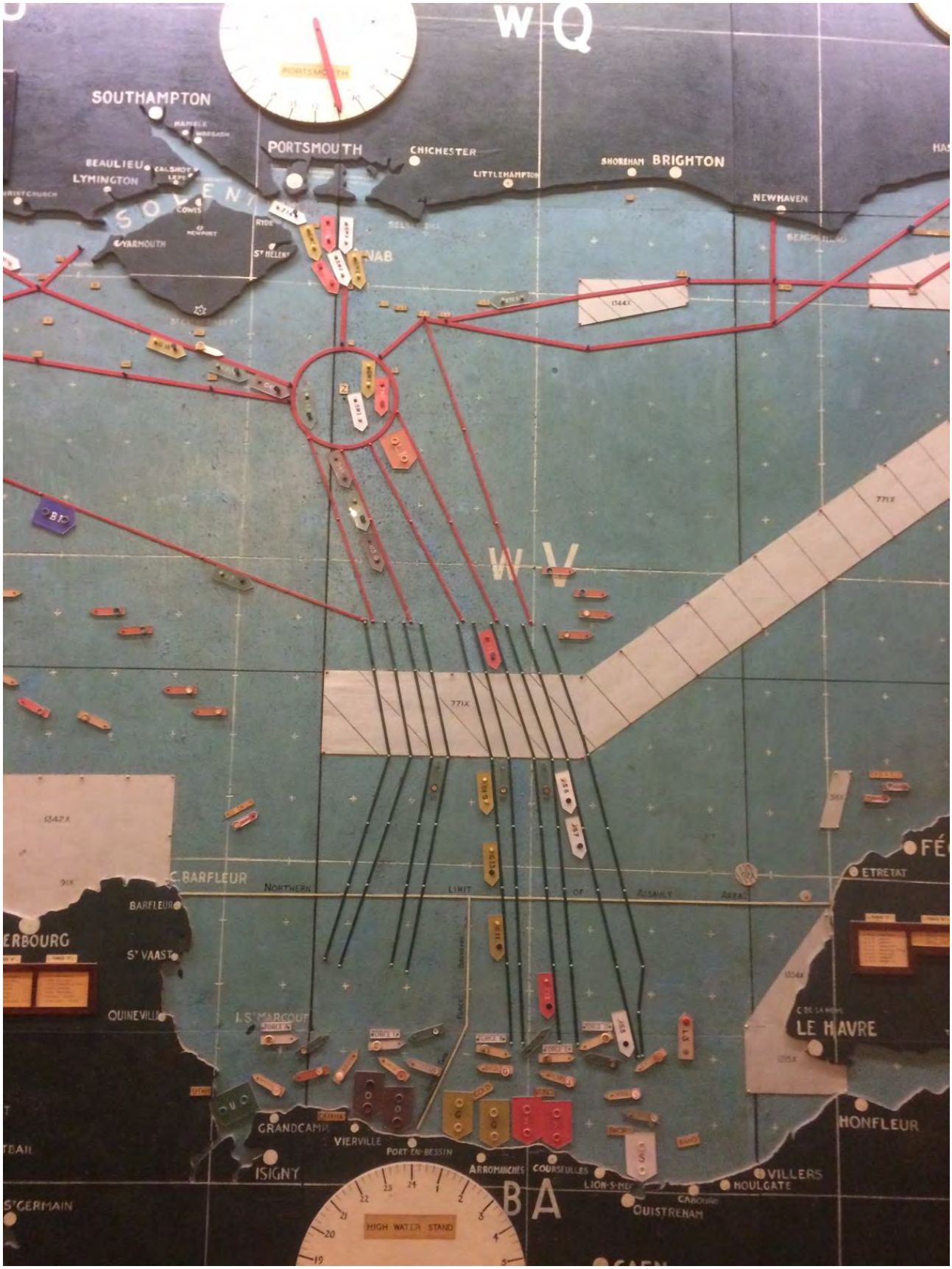
We remember Horatio Nelson still, because he is worth remembering. He personified everything we hold important. Tradition is a living thing. It consists of the efforts of today's Navy to maintain the standards of predecessors, to draw confidence from our history and to strive to keep our reputation intact. In speaking of the 'immortal memory' we remember not just one officer and his outstanding qualities which we should seek to emulate, but also what his contemporaries, his forebears and his successors represent — professional competence, clear thinking, dedication to duty and daring. When we drink the toast it acts as an encouragement to think 'are we up to the Nelson standards?'

This is why we remember Admiral Lord Nelson in particular: he represents the best of our service across the centuries.

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

The Bulletin Volume 63, No. 4, March 2020

Contents



For Operation Neptune (D-Day) each separate invasion force followed a preset course to the swept channels through defensive minefields on to their nominated beach. This is a section of the actual planning map used at the time. It is still displayed at Southwick House, chosen to be the advance command post of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force.

Picture by Ian Duckett *See page 11*

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Important Changes to Membership Renewal for 2020!

As was agreed at the AGM in May, we have been forced by rising costs to increase subscription rates for the first time in ten years. It is important that *your bank* receives a new Standing Order as soon as possible. The new Standing Order form is enclosed with this Bulletin. *Don't forget an early payment will help all of us.*

We are also introducing a digital Bulletin as a positive choice for the first time. You will receive this as a PDF email, instead of the printed version. The great advantage is that *should you opt for this, your membership rate will remain at £15 and your Standing Order with your bank does not need to change*.

The new rates are shown below:

UK Members: Single	UK Members: Joint	Overseas Members •
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Next year promises to be even more exciting. For those who can make the journey to hear our Athenaeum talks, we have Professor Nick White delivering the first Bill Pape Lecture on the technical revolution that transformed modern shipping. We will hear the life story of the elegant **Manxman**, plus we will discover the iconic beauty of the maritime art of Kenneth Shoesmith, to name only a few. In addition, the Bulletin will again reward us with its consistent variety of stimulating contributions. Well worth the subscription fee on its own!

Don't forget: **A Standing Order is a much easier payment method**
Get it to the bank nice and early!

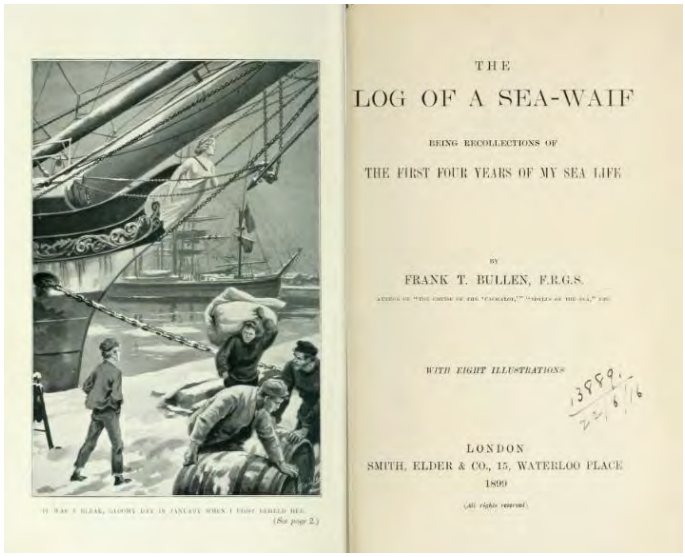
How the Sea Shanty became a symbol of 'Britishness'

Summarising the presentation to the Society on 16 January, 2020

Graeme Milne, University of Liverpool

We often assume that the sea shanty is an ancient and timeless form of music, but shantying as we know it was only in widespread use from about the 1840s to the 1880s, when the deep-water sailing-ship industry expanded to its maximum global reach. Soon after, collectors created a published canon of shanties, which in turn inspired subsequent revivals up to our own time. Like any oral folk tradition, shanties were easily lost, and we would know little about them if not for that pioneering generation of collectors.

Shanties had a very particular purpose. They helped with the hard physical labour of hauling ropes, turning capstans, and other more specialised tasks on sailing ships. One member of the crew, the shantyman, would sing the short lines that carried the narrative of the song and set its pace. In between, the crew would sing an even shorter chorus, which was stressed on particular sounds as they pulled or heaved. By all accounts this provided encouragement, lightened


THE

LOG OF A SEA-WAIF

BEING RECOLLECTIONS OF

THE FIRST FOUR YEARS OF MY SEA LIFE

BY

FRANK T. BULLEN, F.R.G.S.

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS

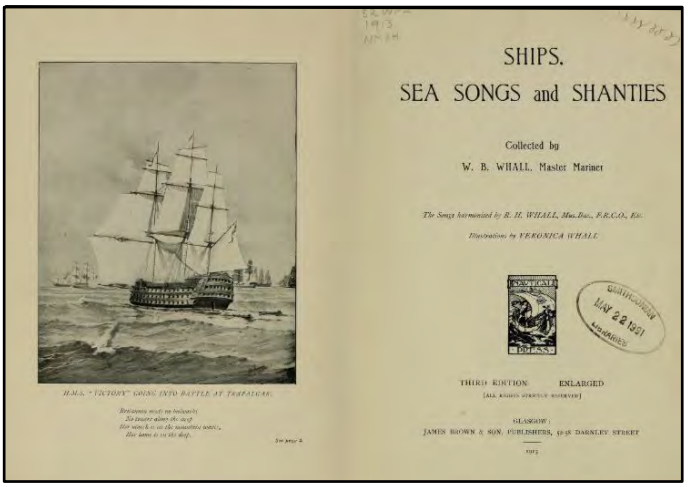
LONDON

SMITH, ELDER & CO., 15, WATERLOO PLACE

1899

Examples of early shanty publications *Pictures courtesy The Internet Archive*

the load, and made everyone work in unison. The transition to steam made this labour obsolete, along with its accompanying music. Work on steamers was still hard and dangerous, but there was no longer a need for teams of men to haul and heave ropes and sails.


SHIPS.

SEA SONGS and SHANTIES

Collected by

W. B. WHALL, Master Mariner

THIRD EDITION. ENLARGED

Shanties should not be confused with the songs that sailors sang when they were off duty or on shore; those were referred to at the time as 'forebitters', or just as 'sailors' songs'.

These became popular in the music halls, but were much more lyrical and tuneful than the specialist working shanties.

Shanty collecting was part of the wider folk-music revival of the early twentieth century, but with some real differences. Whereas collectors of village and farm songs were mostly middle-class music scholars, shanty collectors were often retired seafarers. Frank Bullen, for example, worked on sailing ships in the West Indies and US trades in the 1870s, and had actually been a shantyman. He subsequently qualified as a mate and joined the officers. Bullen believed that his experience made his collection particularly authentic, because it was rooted in the culture of the ordinary seamen.

This made Bullen rather different from someone like W. B. Whall, a retired captain, who had his own claims to authenticity. Whall went to sea after receiving a formal education, and he kept notes of the shanties sung on his ships in the 1860s. Different again was Laura Alexandrine Smith, who published a pioneering volume in 1888. The daughter of a commercial consul, she built connections across northern Europe that let her uncover shanty traditions from Nordic, Dutch, German and Russian seamen.

The early collectors uncovered many fascinating characteristics of the shanty. For example, shanties were remarkably flexible. Although the overall meaning and purpose of a song could stay the same for long periods, the detail of it changed frequently. Shantymen adapted their verses according to their knowledge of the crew, sometimes singing about unpopular officers to provide a safety-valve for discontented sailors. A song used for work during departure or arrival might have a lot of local detail about the port in question, so would change with every voyage even while its purpose remained the same.

Collectors also had to concede that many shantymen used lyrics that were obscene and unprintable in their day. Passengers and travellers reported that hearing the sailors sing was impressive and moving, but that it was best not to pay close attention to the verses.

Shanties, then, were a genuine folk music phenomenon, created and adapted by seafarers themselves, and not imposed on them by officers or outsiders. This made them hard for non-seafarers to understand, and we are fortunate that collectors with seafaring experience wrote their books when they did.

Shanties also have wider meanings. The early twentieth century was a time of national soul-searching, as urbanisation and industrialisation brought huge changes to traditional life. Also, Britain was increasingly conscious of the rise of competing powers like Germany and United States. The maritime sector had long been seen as a vital part of Britain’s national character and identity, and it increasingly came to symbolise Britishness.

This posed a dilemma for shanty collectors, who were proud of the British merchant marine, but also well aware that shanties were a truly international form of music. Frank Bullen, with his long experience in the West Indies and the southern United States, argued that many shanties had origins in the songs of African and African-American workforces at sea and on shore. Men working pile-drivers and hauling cotton bales in the American South all used work songs. Workers moved constantly in the Americas, with new people arriving every year to build canals and levees, and then railroads. Such patterns created a steady remixing of musical influences from roots in Irish, African, Scots, French and new American urban cultures.

This was also a time when an increasing proportion of Nordic, German and other continental European seamen crewed British sailing ships. The fact that British seamen were moving to steamships and leaving the shrinking sail sector to be crewed by foreigners was hugely controversial in its day. The collector W. B. Whall blamed these seafarers for the decline of shantying, but others, like the poet John Masefield, praised the beauty of shanties sung by Norwegian, Greek and Russian crews.

During and after the Great War, it seemed unpatriotic to argue that shanties were anything other than purely British. Over time, though, they came to be seen as a uniquely international musical phenomenon. Britain had the world's largest merchant fleet of the nineteenth century, but it always depended on a diverse workforce, and it was constantly brought into contact with cultures around the globe. Inevitably, this complicated any simple definition of who created or owned the sea shanty.

Much of the debate around shanties in the early twentieth century would probably have been forgotten had it not been for Stan Hugill. One of the very last working shantymen in the 1930s, Hugill's shanty research in the 1960s combined a careful critique of the early collectors with thoughtful reflections on his own experience. Hugill's books pioneered modern shanty scholarship and fed into the 1960s folk movement. Many current shanty singers trace their inspiration to Hugill, and then back to Whall and Bullen.

We are now living through another great popular boom in shanty-singing, but we still need to know more about shanties, where they came from and how they changed over time. Music that can have so many meanings ought to be more widely studied.

Further reading: A set of three papers on shanties by Graeme Milne, Gerry Smyth and Catherine Tackley was published in *International Journal of Maritime History* (vol. 29, no. 2, May 2017). This has full references to the original collections mentioned here.

A Laugh on the Ocean Wave

A precis of the talk given to the Society by Brian Price on 19th December, 2019

Brian ran away to sea in 1963 after discovering that any promotion in his job in the bank would be due to length of service and not qualifications. His good friend, and Medical Superintendent of Cunard Line Ian Reid Entwistle suggested he might try a career with Cunard as an Assistant Purser saying that it was the same as being in the bank but with the additional chance of getting drowned.

Cunard's Mr Ken Leckie called Brian and he attended and passed an interview at the Cunard Office at the Pierhead, where, as well as the usual junior officer requirements he was asked three questions; can you type, can you speak a foreign language and can you ballroom dance? He answered in the affirmative even though the dancing bit was not true. In the two months that followed his mother taught the ins and outs of everything ballroom.

His first trip to sea was RMS **Queen Mary** followed by RMS **Queen Elizabeth**, followed by a Liverpool based ship: RMS **Sylvania**.

In 1967 he took a course with the BBC for public speaking and microphone techniques, and 1968 he switched over to the entertainment department and became Deputy Cruise Director of the **Carmania** and eventually took over as Cruise Director a year later. On his first cruise in the position as cruise director, on the first day at sea, the Captain called him to the Bridge to give a commentary on the island of San Salvador. He quickly swotted up some facts, but three quarters of the way through the commentary the ship ran aground on a coral reef...Brian said it was the fastest disappearing act he'd ever do.

Brian talked about the responsibilities of the Cruise Director and briefly mentioned some of the well-known celebrities (when the word meant something) he's met – starting with Richard Burton, Buzz Aldrin and ending with Terence Stamp, and some more infamous such as Jimmy Savile.

For those who'd never been on a cruise Brian discussed the differences in what to expect on a cruise ship - a short taster cruise all the way through to a world cruise, of which he has managed many.

He went on to mention that one of the worst problems he ever had to deal with was an over-abundance of single mature ladies particularly on the long world cruises of **QE2**. This was initially resolved by enticing off-duty officers to the lounges until maritime regulations introduced random breath tests, and brought this voluntary duty to an abrupt end. Cunard then started a programme of 'hiring' Gentleman Dance Hosts.

Brian finished by talking about some of the complications this programme produced, and finally regaled all those present gentlemen of the LNRS on the qualifications and duties of Gentleman Dance Hosts (nicknamed: Gigolos). Fitness being one qualification- Brian said that if you can climb the four flights of stairs in The Athenaeum Club to the meeting then you are fit enough, just as long as you can dance.

He provided the club with all the information for anyone who'd like to sign up.....bon voyages.

Additional notes:

*The **Carmania** mentioned in Brian's talk was actually named **Saxonia** when launched in 1954 and, together with her three near sisterships was built to operate the service from the United Kingdom to Montreal, Canada. They were among the last vessels built for transatlantic passenger service. She operated her maiden voyage from Liverpool to Montreal on 2 September 1954. The ship was refitted in 1962 and given another Cunard name from earlier in the century, **Carmania**. As such she continued service on the Rotterdam - Le Havre - Southampton - Canada route for several years, and cruised in the Caribbean and Mediterranean in the winters.*

*During 1968, difficulties with US fire regulations resulted in cancellation of a winter cruise from Port Everglades. Cunard made some minor modifications to the ship before the next sailing in January 1969. On a later cruise the vessel ran aground on a sandbank off San Salvador Island in the Bahamas. Three months after returning to service the ship collided with the 3,900-ton Soviet tanker **Frunze**, but damage to both vessels was apparently minor.*

*She, together with the **Franconia**, was laid up at Southampton in 1971. In August 1973 she was bought by the Soviet Union-based Black Sea Shipping Company and renamed **Leonid Sobinov**. In January 1979, as the ship lay in Sydney Harbour, an 18 year old crew member, Liliana Gasinskaya, slipped out of a porthole wearing only a red bikini, and swam across the harbour to claim political asylum.*

By 1995, the liner was again laid up, and in 1999, she was brought to Alang, India and scrapped after a long and varied career.

MONDAY MEETINGS

The museum web site states:

The Maritime Archives and Library is closed to the public and will not reopen until Monday 30 March 2020 at 10.30am, due to the closure of the second floor of Merseyside Maritime Museum as we prepare the new "Life on Board" gallery.

Seacombe Submarine

by L.N.R.S. Member W.G.Williamson

It was in the 1880s that improvements in the technology of electric batteries made it possible to power submerged vessels by electricity. At the time this was seen as a viable and reliable means of propulsion for a new type of craft, namely the submarine. The many attempts at underwater craft powered by various means but mainly steam had shown the inadequacy of such power sources. It was not surprising therefore that individual ship designers and engineers in Russia, France, Spain and England were at the forefront of experimenting with batteries as a power source. In fact the Russians were the first nation to power a submarine by electric power in 1884 and the boat was able to make 4 knots underwater against a river current.

Surprising as it may seem, one of two companies in England engaged in these experiments was based on the River Mersey at Seacombe on the Wirral peninsula. In June of 1886, James Waddington started up his shipbuilding and electrical engineering business, aged 25, at the former shipyard of Andrews & Company at Seacombe. Trading as J.F. Waddington & Co, they advertised as builders of submarine vessels, steam and electric launches etc.

There were no slipways at this yard, they merely had a moderately high quay wall made from sandstone blocks. The ships were launched during high spring tides when the water level came over the wall allowing the ships to be floated off.

Waddington had worked for Cochran & Co for a while at their yard near New Street, Seacombe. This company had built the famous submarine **Resurgam**. Today, a fullsize replica of the **Resurgam** can be seen at the Woodside Ferry Terminal at Birkenhead. James Waddington appears to have been chiefly interested in electrical engineering and he designed a submarine, which he called the **Porpoise**.

This boat was similar in design to the **Resurgam** and the best descriptions of her were found in the Lamar News of 30th September 1886, a US publication and in The Illustrated Australian News of 1st August 1888. From these articles a fairly full description of the boat can be derived.

She was cigar shaped, 37 feet long and 6 feet in diameter at the centre, tapering off at the pointed ends. A tower was mounted on the boat, and her depth of immersion was regulated by external inclined planes, placed one on either side and controlled from inside the boat. She was fitted with a rudder placed aft, and a self-acting arrangement served to keep the vessel in a horizontal position.

The boat was divided into three compartments by two bulkheads. She was manned by a crew of one or two men and a supply of compressed air in the end chambers was provided for the crew when submerged for long periods. The motive power was electricity, which were stored in 50 cells placed at the bottom of the central chamber. These drove a screw propeller, and their capacity was sufficient to propel the boat for 10 hours at a speed of almost nine knots, either below the water or on its surface. (This claim for underwater speed seems suspicious). The cells also

supplied lights through glow lamps, and to drive a pump for emptying the water ballast tanks.

The **Porpoise** carried out several trials in the East Float of Birkenhead docks and the results declared highly satisfactory.

The central chamber or control room carrying the officer in charge contained enough air to allow two persons to remain in it for six hours. Foul air was expelled through special valves that open automatically as soon as the internal pressure became greater than the external pressure. The article noted that it might be possible to absorb the disengaged carbonic acid by means of chemical re-agents, in order to keep the air from getting foul. The control chamber was provided with a small lookout, containing large light ports which could be closed hermetically by the access hatch. Movable hand rails could be placed around the lookout when the boat was not submerged.

Submersion was controlled and regulated by means of two vertical helices contained in tubes resting against the bulkheads of the air chambers. Each of these was actuated by a dedicated motor and could be driven separately. The boat was also provided with two plates with counterpoises moving around a horizontal axis. These were situated on the outside and could be maneuvered from inside to achieve submersion while running. The boat had four submersion rudders, two of them horizontal and two vertical, designed to secure a horizontal position. These rudders acted automatically under the influence of a special electro-motor, controlled by a sort of pendulum which entered into play as soon as the boat inclined the least bit. All the essential control levers etc. were grouped together in the central chamber within easy reach of the officer who could therefore manipulate all the required movements.

Finally, care was taken to see that the boat could be immediately brought to the surface in case of emergency, and, to this effect, it was provided with a heavy weight beneath the hull that could be detached quickly.

Two large boxes (ballast tanks) at the side of the central chamber could be filled with water when the boat was ready to dive. By reason of its perceived use the boat carried three torpedoes. These were mounted externally and held merely by hooks that could be released from inside. Two of them were self-moving torpedoes, whose propellers started to run automatically when they were detached from the boat. The third was a mine torpedo, fixed on the deck at the back of the lookout. These were designed for attacking ships at anchor which were equipped with protective nets. This mine was to be set free when the boat was under the enemy ship. On moving away, the boat remained in contact with the torpedo through electric wires that permitted it to explode when some distance from the target.

The submersion of the boat while running was assured by the action on the lateral plates, so as to incline them and it was estimated that the speed then reaches 5 knots. Use could also be made of the vertical screws that regulated the submerged depth by their velocity. However, they were normally employed to effect a submersion in situ.

The Illustrated Australian News article concluded with the following paragraph.

"From this description, it will be seen that all the details of this boat have been carefully elaborated, and there is reason to think that, without being yet definitive, this new type is destined to give important results in practice.

The English journals, moreover, inform us that very encouraging trials of it have been made at Liverpool, in the presence of delegates from various naval powers."

The innovation of this boat was in its propulsion system. The **Porpoise** used an accumulator whose cells were arranged in series, driving a motor coupled to the propeller shaft capable of about 750 rpm. With this set up the craft was able to make about 8 mph for about eight hours on the surface. Waddington had fitted vertical propellers in tubes at different parts of the vessel which kept the boat on an even keel when submerging and when stationary. Sea trials of the **Porpoise** apparently went well and Waddington had high hopes for his craft and was anxious to get the Royal Navy interested in it. Despite his high hopes Waddington was to be disappointed. The Admiralty, for whatever reason, were not interested in his invention. Not everyone was impressed by Waddington's new invention although it did show some potential. Some clue as to the Admiralty's lack of enthusiasm may be deduced from an article in the "Army and Navy Gazette" of 17th July 1886. This article entitled "Electrical Boats for the Service", written by a Mr. C. Sleeman (Ex RN) said,

"*The Waddington boat is 37 feet long and 6 feet diameter in the centre tapering towards each end; its motive power consists of 50 EPS 15 L cells, each cell weighing 122 lbs and capable of giving a current of 33 Amps for ten hours of fairly constant 2 Volt pressure; the motor is a small Reckenzaum five horse power motor. These cells are used, in addition to driving the motor, for lighting of the vessel. It can only be said that, if this badly shaped craft is, with the said motor power, capable of being propelled at a rate of nine miles an hour for 10 hours, and has the durability of 250 miles for one charge, there is a splendid opportunity for electricity in propelling properly designed boats at a high speed.*"

Sadly this innovative craft that nobody wanted was left at anchor a bit below the high water mark opposite the Marine Terrace at Seacombe. There she remained for two years before being broken up on the beach.

It is known that the Waddington company built one of the Mersey ferries used on the Wooodside to Liverpool service. This was the **Firefly**, 165 tons twin screw passenger ferry.

The company also built the **Gloria** for Bickersteth, Baker & Co of Liverpool. (11th February 1887) and the **Olinda** for H. Savill & Co. (28th October 1887).

Thus ended the brief career of this shipyard and indeed of end of shipbuilding at Seacombe. An extract from the London Gazette of 18th August 1889 shows that one James Franklin Waddington (trading as J.F. Waddington & Co) residing at 5 Somerville, Seacombe, Cheshire was declared backrupt by the Birkenhead High Court of Justice in Bankruptcy on the 8th August 1889.

What happened to Waddington after this demoralising state of affairs? It appears that somehow he managed to bounce back from his financial setbacks. At

some point he went to the United States for references have been found to him having designed a four-masted steel barque called the **Dirigo**. A painting of this ship contained the following note.

*"The **Dirigo** was built in 1894 by Arthur Sewall & Co., Bath, Maine, the first steel ship built in the United States, to the design of J.F. Waddington, of Liverpool, at a total cost of $157,000. She was launched at the Bath, Maine, shipyard on February 3, 1894. Her first captain was George W. Goodwin, of Calais, Maine, and his name is printed on label fixed to the backing paper*."

The **Dirigo** was a bulk cargo vessel which had a successful commercial career of twenty two years. On the 2nd March 1916, while carrying a load of barley to Sweden she was arrested by a British patrol ship and was brought into Lerwick. Her cargo was confiscated as it was believed that the barley she carried would have been transhipped from Sweden to Germany. She was released a year later but on 31st May 1917, she was sunk by explosives from a German submarine six miles southwest of the Eddystone Rock.

The **Dirigo** did acquire a little claim to fame. In February 1912, the writer Jack London and his wife Charmian boarded the ship in Baltimore for a trip around Cape Horn returning home in August. It was during this voyage that London got the idea for his novel "The Mutiny on the Elsinore" that was published in 1914.

(Note. The steel plates for her hull were produced by Messrs. David Colville & Sons, and came all the way from Motherwell, Scotland.)

Four years after **Dirigo**, Sewall launched her sister ship, the **Erskine W. Phelps**, to great fanfare. It is assumed Waddington took credit for designing this ship also.

Waddington must have retained his interest in submarines for it is known that he filed a patent application for the design of a submarine on the 21st June 1916 in the US. This patent was approved on 15th April 1919. The introduction to this patent is of interest,

"To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, James Franklin Waddington, a subject of the King of England, residing at Beverly, in the county of Burlington, and State of New Jersey, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Submarine Vessels, of which the following is a specification."

After this Waddington's trail goes cold.

Private life.

It is known that on the 25th August 1884 at St Paul's Church, Low Moor, Clitheroe, one James Franklin Waddington (23) and described as Shipbuilder Bachelor of Birkenhead, England married Amelia Rimmer (22) Spinster of "Low Moor" Clitheroe.

The groom's father, John Barton Waddington, was a Clerk in Holy Orders, (i.e. a clergyman). The bride's father was Thomas Rimmer, described as "Colonel late of 77th Regiment.

Gore's Directory for 1886 shows that Waddington and his wife were living at No. 40 Dingle Road, Higher Tranmere. This residence was part of a semi detached property known as Antonia Villas built in 1864. At this time the road was regarded as being one which attracted “well to do” people. Gore's note that several gentlemen resided in Dingle Road as well as at least three engineers, a master mariner, a ship surveyor, a couple of printers, a ships purser and an employee of HM Customs and Excise. This house is still in existence and is actually located quite close to the centre of Birkenhead.

It is likely the couple moved from this property after Waddington's bankrupcy for Gore's of 1890 shows a J.F. Waddington residing at Sandon Road, Brighton Street, Seacombe.

References:

Wallasey Library
Gore's Directories
The Illustrated Australian News of 1st August 1888
Lamar News of 30th September 1886
Army and Navy Gazette of 17th July 1886
London Gazette of 18th August 1889

An account of my Wartime Experiences in 1939-45.

Richard Llewellyn

Editor’s notes: this article incorporates Richard’s notes to the end of his involvement with Operation Overlord. The full notes covering all of his World War II activity is available on our website at https://liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org/

My sole ambition from the age of about 4 was to go to sea. After Prep School I was entered for Pangbourne Nautical College and became an RNR Cadet there in September 1939 aged just 14. I left school as soon as School Certificate Exams were taken - May 1943. Pangbourne trained pupils for a career at sea so one of my Exam Passes was in Navigation. This meant that on HMS **Ajax**, a cruiser, I became the Navigating Officers ‘dogsbody’, called the Navigator’s Tanky, which was OK as my Action Station was always on the bridge, which meant that I had a front row view, as well as being privy to where the ship was going to, etc.

A spell, then, at Greenwich Naval College and Chatham Gunnery School learning gunnery and various other skills, as well as being toughened up before being posted as Midshipman on 21st October 1943 to HMS **Howe**, a battleship which was lying in Scapa Flow. A long train journey which I seem to remember took the best part

of 24 hours including the boat trip to the Orkneys from Scrabster, a small fishing port on the very tip of NE Scotland. Trains were unlit or dimly lit if blinds available, because of the blackout.

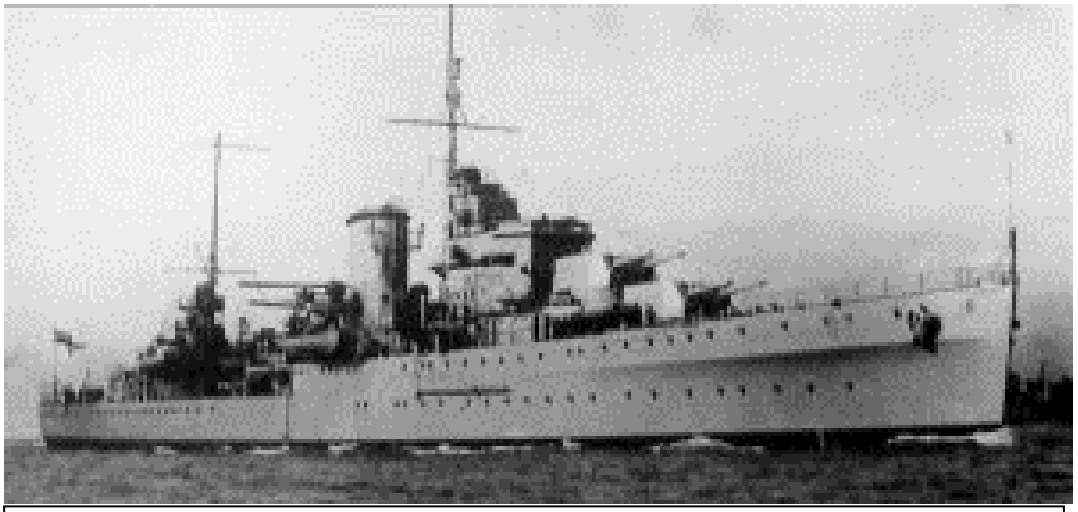
Leaving London, I remember standing in a crowded, dark, cold corridor on the train next to a girl, about my own age. We stood holding hands in the dark, and I remember she got off the train at Royston in Hertfordshire. I don't know why but it was a sort of magical moment and having been brought up in boys' boarding schools it was probably my first female contact in spite of having two older sisters!

I have few recollections of what my duties were on **Howe** or what we did. The ship was due to go into dock for a refit having been engaged in various Atlantic operations. I had to keep a Midshipman's Journal so somewhere in it the months that I spent on the ship will have been written down in a very boring way! I've found my Journal but all the pages relating to the months on the **Howe** are missing!! I do remember gunnery practice at sea when we fired all 8 14 inch guns. Noisy but impressive!

I left **Howe** on 6th December 1943 and whilst she sailed for a refit in Plymouth, I went home for a week's leave before joining HMS **Ajax** in Portsmouth. This ship had just returned from the US having had major repairs after a bomb had been dropped alongside the funnel off the coast of N. Africa, killing most of those on duty in the Engine Room. Apparently, a messy business scraping off all the bloody bits and pieces splattered over the bulkheads. As was normal routine in the war, a ship with a new crew had to embark on a 'working up' programme, which involved everybody becoming familiar with their Action Station duties, etc. and practicing all the many exercises which eventually converts any ship into an efficient fighting machine. So it was that I found myself sailing back to Scapa flow where I guess we arrived about Christmas Eve. On December 26th, Battleships and Cruisers of the Fleet returned from engaging and sinking the German Battleship **Scharnhorst** off the coast of Norway. Scapa Flow in winter is cold, wet, gales and not the best place to do anything! So, our working up programme terminated, on January 18th 1944 and we set sail for Plymouth, where we arrived on 20th. Even in January the contrast between Scapa Flow and the greenery of Plymouth Sound was something to stir the heart. In Plymouth we stored ship and took on ammunition and all the other provisions needed for an extended period away.

On 28th January we sailed for the Mediterranean. The first 24 hours we met severe storms and had solid green water coming over the bridge and causing damage to the structure. The crew were mostly young and on their first sea trip, and I still have memories of the sailor's mess deck awash with vomit, but most sailors recovered after a couple of days at sea. Our first stop was Gibraltar where we arrived on 31st January to gorgeous warm sunshine which I remember so well never having been further away

from UK than Brittany in 1939! These were the days when long distance overseas travel was the privilege of the very few and obviously not at all during the war! After the drabness of wartime Britain in winter it was a bit of magic!



HMS Ajax *Picture courtesy Wikimedia*

But we left the same day heading first for Algiers, then Malta and finally ending up in the Red Sea via Alexandria and the Suez Canal. Because of the weather in Scapa we never really completed our work-up so, in the supposed calm of the Red Sea (which was anything but at times) we spent 10 days completing gunnery, anti-aircraft and torpedo firing exercises, etc. Life at sea, on passage to where ever we were going, was made up of watch keeping, which for me was always on the bridge. Watches were 4 hours long, except the dog watches, which were only two hours each. We were on duty 4 hours on and 4 hours off. My watches were on the bridge, always alert for enemy aircraft, submarine or E-boat attack. We intercepted shipping and checked whether from a neutral country, etc. otherwise life was uneventful.

We returned to the Mediterranean and stayed until May and in those intervening months travelled extensively in the central and eastern sectors. Life was fairly routine, and included a bombardment of Rhodes harbour, time in Malta and then Naples where we supported the Allied landings at Anzio a little further north along the coast. We were lucky enough to be in Naples during the eruption of Vesuvius which was spectacular. At night we anchored in the Bay of Naples and in the morning had to hose the ash off the decks. Visited Pompeii, climbed to the top of Vesuvius with the help of the army, and went to a performance of La Boheme at the San Carlo Opera House, looking a little the worse for wear after years of war, but a memorable occasion never the less.

Our time in Italy was interrupted by an urgent dash back to Alexandria to help contain a mutiny on board a number of Greek warships which were lying in the harbour. The crews were threatening to shoot anybody who tried to board them. Eventually after 12 days stand-off two of the Greek ships were boarded during the

night and the other ships surrendered with comparatively minor casualties. However, there was a heavily armed Greek cruiser in Port Said where the crew had also mutinied, and we had to go there before the incident was finally over.

On May 10th we sailed for UK and arrived in Gibraltar in the middle of the night for oil and left before it got light. Since most of the cruisers in the Mediterranean were doing the same thing, secrecy was important because of the build-up to the invasion of France, but we didn't know that at the time. We returned to Scapa Flow and the next couple of weeks was spent doing more gunnery practice and spending a few days in Greenock where some early radar sets were installed.

DIARY NOTES

I discovered my Diary and my Midshipman's Journal that I had to keep which contains a far more detailed account of events) after 70 years when I thought I would never see them again! Taking account of where I have lived and what I've been doing over the past 70 years they could not exist now, without some Divine intervention. It was only a very small pocket diary and there were no such things as Biro pens in those days, only pencils. The pencilled writing has faded over 70 years and in places is not easy to read and, coming from an 18-year-old, they probably don't do justice to such an historic occasion! Anyway, what follows are some of the notes I made, often scribbled under very difficult circumstances, during those few amazing days around 6th June 1944 - D-Day. The Diary along with my Midshipman's Log Book are in the Imperial War Museum

Saturday June 3rd

"This morning at 1130 we left Greenock in company with the Cruiser Squadron. This includes **Belfast** (C.S. 10 - 10th Cruiser Squadron) **Diadem, Orion, Emerald, Argonaut** and ourselves. (**Ajax**). Last night left Greenock and what with all the secret conferences etc., which have been going on, we more or less knew we were going to take part in the second front.

Whether we were to go direct or stop at a south coast port we didn't know until the captain spoke over the S.R.E. after leaving Greenock. He said that we were now on our way to open the second front and our job was to get the army ashore and maintain them there. We were liable to do much bombardment and spend long hours

at action stations. He said he had great confidence in us and knew **Ajax** would maintain her fine traditions.

It is now just 1500 hours and I intend to jot all the happenings of the next few days in this diary. Naturally, at present we are all wondering what to expect from the enemy and where we shall be required first. I think that we may be going in the Cherbourg direction but that remains to be seen.

At lunch time today the conversation ran on the lines of who'd be coming out. OK. Personally, I think that this is a bad line for a conversation but it was really only jokingly. Somehow, I have a feeling of confidence that we'll all be OK and I hope on leave before long. (Much overdue)!! At present we are just leaving the Firth of Clyde and entering the Irish Channel or North Channel whichever it is. I'm not sure.

I have the 'first dog' and, unfortunately, the Middle watch. – however !!

Sunday June 4th

2230. Tonight, but for the one most unfortunate factor, we should now be steaming in towards the French Coast. This morning, however, it was decided the weather was too rough for the invasion to start so the whole thing has been delayed for 24 hours. Much disappointment was felt when this was announced. To-night however the prospects look better. The sun is out and the sea is moderating. At this moment, 2230, we are approximately in the same position as last night. During the day we have steamed around in the Irish Sea.

When I think of it the fact that the whole Invasion of Europe has been delayed, perhaps a matter of 24 hours, it seems incredible. There must have been much misgiving amongst the high officials to-day and great feats of reorganisation must have been performed. I believe it is just as well it didn't start 24 hours before it was first due, as the results might have been disastrous!

Owing to the heavy seas, more men and materials to support the initial landings could not have been put ashore. I only hope the delay won't have any long-term ill effects. I have the First Watch to-night so should get a good night's sleep!

Monday June 5th

1315. After an anxious forenoon during which the sea was really rough, we have rounded Land's End and are now on our way up the Channel. The waves have gone down and the sun is shining. The coast of Cornwall is visible and the sea is a wonderful blue. One might almost say 'perfect invasion weather'! The Captain has just broadcast telling us the Second Front is liable to start any hour and we must be prepared for attacks from the enemy, particularly from E-boats, U-boats and the Air. E-Boats seem to be the most probable source of danger at the moment.

22.30. 'The Invasion is on'! At Night Action Stations. The Commander told us what is to happen. I won't go into details as they will soon be news. After N.A. Action Stations I visited the Plot and discovered the details from Torps (*Torpedo Officer*). We go to Action Stations at 0400 which suits me nicely as I was to have had the Morning Watch anyway! We should arrive at our Bombardment position at 0445 and when it is light 0515 (approx.) commence our shoot at a 6" shore battery.

At 0645 Heavy Bombers come in and at 0725 our troops land.

At 2000 tonight minesweepers started to sweep channels for us and, during tonight, paratroopers are to be landed. At the moment I am just about to turn in and hope no events take place before 0400. Everything is quite normal on the ship, just a slight feeling of excitement and everyone is pleased that we are at last doing what we came back from the Med to do.

Tuesday 6th & Wednesday 7th June

0145 Today has been a very tiring but very interesting day. Since this morning, or in actual fact yesterday morning as this is being written in the Middle Watch, however, I'll refer to it as to-day still.

We closed up at Action Stations at 0400. We were then passing down the swept channel made by our Minesweepers earlier. The channel was marked by buoys and was only 4 cables wide. It led due South to the Invasion area - between Le Havre and Cherbourg. As we steamed down the channel at 12 knots, we passed convoys of LCTs, invasion craft, and transports which were to come in later. Along the French coast our bombers were busy, fires raging.

0500 reached buoy marking end of swept channel, turned left opposite Gold Beach. Sighted target which opened fire. Started bombardment - target destroyed. Heavy bombardment all along coast -whole area under heavy shelling.

0705 Anchored. Rocket ships in position and opened fire 17 minutes before H-Hour. Smoke and Noise. Assault craft went in at 0725, all ships bombarding.

Noise intense, aircraft bombing shore defences, all ships bombarding, landing craft fitted with rocket launchers blasting off, amazing scenes of action. Yanks to the right, us to the left. Day wore on, towns beings shelled, saw tankers and LCTs going up in smoke. Americans having difficulties on Omaha beach.

2000 shifted berth in-shore for night. Defence watch. Listened to the news – funny to think we were actually here! Night Action Stations 2130. 2nd Degree. Had Middle Watch so turned in.

2315 woken by explosion. Whole ship rocking, thought we'd been hit. Action Stations - learned how a plane had passed low overhead. Dropped bombs midships, landed 10 yards astern. Ideal night for planes. Moon. Low clouds. JU88 passed low overhead. Opened fire with everything. **Emerald** hit. Another near miss on **Ajax** - port

bow. Terrific flash. Blinded and doubled up. Terrific explosions due to shallow water. Marvelous Brocks fireworks show. Many bombs dropped in water and on shore. Amazing sight. 1135 raid over.

Shifted berth. **Emerald** OK - don't know where hit. Lots of activity during Middle. Mostly our beachheads. **Argonaut** opened fire again with 4" guns at unidentified plane. Big fires burning ashore, silhouetting landing craft. Flares, many coloured explosions, etc. Many unidentified planes in the area but till now no more bombs. Troops at Action Stations, Officers not."

This is the end of my diary notes.

Extract from official Report:

Off Gold Beach, Normandy coast for D-day assault. ***AJAX*** *was the first ship to open fire on D-day and partially destroyed her first target, a battery of 6" guns at Longues sur Mer in 18 minutes - 114 X 6" shells at 6,000 yards, direct hits through two of the 5.9" gun ports of the 4 guns)*

It took another 2 hours to completely silence the battery of guns. Site rediscovered in 1986 – and now a tourist attraction and Monument to D-Day.

My Journal tells me that on the morning of 9th June we dashed back to Plymouth as we had fired all ammunition and needed to load more, and we were back in Normandy the same night!! It seems as though there were air raids most nights though none on a large scale, and by June 11th the coast in the area of 'Gold' had been secured by the army and we moved along to 'Sword' area opposite Ouistreham.

The army were having difficulty in taking the town of Caen and we supported them by shelling all and every target from gun batteries to tanks, or even German infantry. We watched as our own bombers carried out raids - some being shot down. The German defence of Caen held up the advance inland and the town was eventually completely destroyed before it was captured.

We left Normandy on the 21st June and docked in Portsmouth where we had a partial refit, new gun barrels fitted, etc. Had 7 days leave and strange to return to the comparative peace of home in the south of London. But it was the time of the V1 pilotless bombs and they were a little disconcerting. Interestingly we had heard them go overhead in Normandy but didn't know what they were - they made a noise like a lawnmower. The engine would cut out, there would be a few seconds of silence before a shattering explosion. It brought back memories of the 'exciting' days of the Blitz in August and September 1940, but that's another story!! After the noise of Normandy, and indeed during the Blitz, stress levels were high, and any unexpected noise made me start!

Titanic Steel and Iron Co

From Grace's Guide to British Industrial History
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This application of the word Titanic is unusual because it does not refer to that infamous maritime tragedy. In this case the company was named 'Titanic' because Robert Forester Mushet was experimenting with use of the metal Titanium at that time

Mushet (1811 – 1891), a British metallurgist, was born April 8, 1811, in Coleford, Gloucestershire. He was the youngest son of Agnes Wilson and David Mushet, an ironmaster. Robert spent his formative years studying metallurgy with his father, formerly of the Clyde, Alfreton and Whitclift Ironworks.

In 1856 Mushet found an inexpensive way to make high quality steel by adding ferromanganese, or spiegeleisen brought from Rhennish Prussia. He explained that... "*during the summer of 1848 Mr. Henry Burgess, editor of The Bankers' Circular, brought me a lump of white crystallized metal which he said was found in Rhenish Prussia, where, he was told, a mountain of it existed. He had merely confounded iron with iron ore, an error often committed. Being familiar with alloys of iron and manganese*," says Mr. Mushet, "I at once recognized this lump of metal as an alloy of these two metals and, as such, of great value in the making of steel. Later, I found that the white metallic alloy was the product of steel ore, called also spathose iron ore, being, in fact, a double carbonate of iron and manganese found in the Rhenish mountains, and that it was most carefully selected and smelted in small blast furnaces, charcoal fuel alone being employed and the only flux used being lime. The metal was run from the furnace into shallow iron troughs similar to the old refiners' boxes, and the cakes thus formed, when cold and broken up, showed large and beautifully bright facets and crystals specked with minute spots of uncombined carbon. It was called, from its brightness, 'spiegel glanz' or spiegel eisen, i.e., looking-glass iron. Practically its analysis was: Iron, 86.25%; manganese, 8.50% and carbon, 5.25%; making a total of 100%."

The Company was established in 1862 by Robert Mushet whose work was fundamental in solving problems associated with the Bessemer steel making process.

He went on to develop the use of Titanium which improved the steel's malleability –- its ability to withstand rolling and forging at high temperatures –- without which the Bessemer process for making steel would not have been an economic success. Bessemer's method had only produced "burnt" wrought iron, lacking strength, but Mushet's innovation restored the quality of the steel.

In 1857 Mushet was the first to make durable rails of steel rather than cast iron, providing the basis for the development of rail transportation throughout the world in the late Nineteenth century. The first of Mushet's steel rails was delivered to Derby Midland Station, where it was laid down early in 1857 at a heavily trafficked part of the line where the iron rails had to be renewed every six months, and occasionally every three. Six years later, in 1863, the rail seemed as perfect as ever, some 700 trains passing over it daily.

Making a second key advance in metallurgy, under a patent he applied for in 1857, Mushet produced the first commercial steel alloy in 1868 by adding a small amount (8%) of tungsten to the molten steel in the crucible. The steel hardened in the air, whereas previously the only way to make steel hard enough for machine tools had been to quench it, by rapid cooling in water. Self-hardening (or tungsten) steel machine tools could run much faster and were able to cut harder metals than had been possible previously. This resulted in a revolution in the design of machine tools and in the progress of industrial metalworking. High strength tool steels could be precision machined for the production of rifles, cutlery, surgical and other instruments.

This led to RMS (Robert Mushet's Special Steel), the manufacture of which was later transferred to Samuel Osborn and Co. Although Mushet filed many valid patents for his inventions, unreliable business partners allowed them to lapse. Mushet was rescued from insolvency and supported by Henry Bessemer, who had benefited by the free use of Mushet's lapsed patents.

Mushet died January 19, 1891 in Cheltenham.

The works closed in 1871 and the premises became neglected, until in 1908 the Office of Woods advertised the property for lease. There appear to have been no takers until 1926, when the property was leased to Lydney District Brickworks and Collieries Ltd, who sub-let to Milkwall Brickworks Ltd in 1928[2]

Many of the steelwork’s buildings stood, precariously, until they were demolished in the 1960s. The site has not been investigated and little is known about the function of the various buildings. Some 1960s photographs and a speculative drawing were presented in a book by Keith Webb, published in 2001[3]

An 1871 Advertisement:

'TITANIC STEEL AND IRON COMPANY (LIMITED).
STEEL AND IRONWORKS FOR SALE BY PRIVATE TREATY.

The Liquidator of the above-named Company is prepared to TREAT for the SALE, by Private Arrangement, as a going Concern, of the whole of the Company's valuable FREEHOLD MANUFACTURING PEMISES, KNOWN AS THE "FOREST STEEL WORKS," Situate at COLEFORD, in the FOREST OF DEAN, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Extending over an area of about Seven Acres. Together with all the WORKSHOPS, ROLLING MILL, FORGE, STOREHOUSES, OFFICES, PLANT and Machinery, also, some valuable PATENTS, LICENSES and LEASES, Including Lease of Darkhill and Shutcastle Collieries

The Liquidator is also prepared to treat separately for the SALE of the ROLLING MILL, with ENGINES, BOILERS, LATHES, SHEARS, &c., therein, which are all nearly new, and in first-class working order.

There are three trains of Rolls, viz., 10-inch, 12-inch, and 10-inch Wire Train, all driven by a 32 inch cylinder, horizontal, high-pressure, non-condensing Engine (76 horse-power nominal), by Davy Brothers, of Sheffield; Fly-wheel, 20 feet in diameter, weighing l0 tons.

Full particulars and orders to inspect the Works, can be obtained on application to Robert Fletcher, 2 Moorgate Street, London, E.C., the Liquidator; or to R.Woodward, Forest Steel Works, Coleford. The Business of the Company is, meanwhile, carried on at the Works.' [1]

Sources of information:

1. *'Birmingham Daily Post'*, 5 September 1871
2. *'The Industrial History of Dean'* by Cyril Hart: David & Charles, 1971
3. *'Robert Mushet and the Darkhill Ironworks'* by Keith Webb, Black Dwarf Publications, 2001

“Parkinson’s Law”

By L.N.R.S. Member Bill Ogle

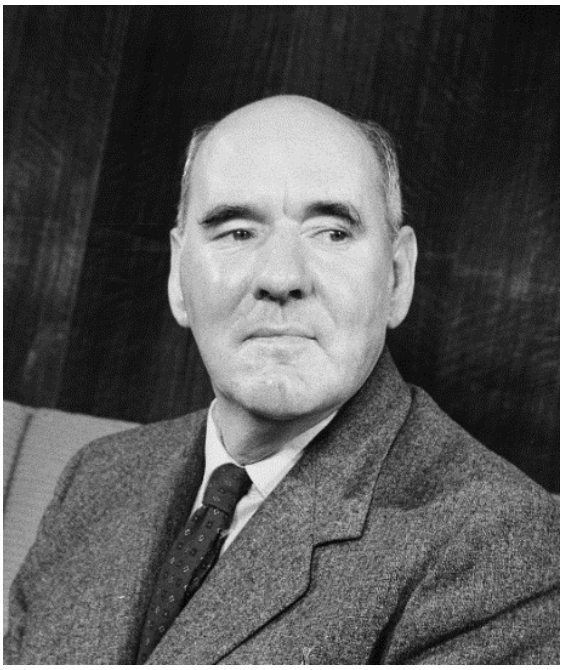
Most readers will be aware of “Parkinson’s Law”, which states that "work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion". It is frequently applied to the growth of bureaucracy in an organisation.

However, there are two factors which are often not realised:

1. It is not particularly old, being first articulated by Cyril N. Parkinson (Born 1909, Barnard Castle, County Durham; died 1993, Canterbury, Kent) as the first sentence of an essay published in *The Economist* in 1955
2. The writer was none other than Dr C Northcote Parkinson, a one time member of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society

Earlier, one of his articles entitled “The Idea of a Maritime Museum”, was published in the L.N.R.S. Transactions (Volume 3, 1947), in which he wrote:

In attempting to interest you in the idea of a Maritime Museum in Liverpool, I shall begin by pleading such right as I have to be heard. My first plea is that I am a Lecturer in Maritime History and so far as I know, the only one in existence. I have a scarcity value, and I mean to make the most of it. More than that, I was, nearly fifteen years ago, one of the late Sir Geoffrey Callender's assistants. When the National Maritime Museum was formed, and before it opened its doors to the public, I constituted fifty per cent of the staff. I knew then, I think I know now, how a Museum is formed. I have seen it happen. While, therefore, I concede that you might reasonably have hoped for a paper from one who knew far more, you might also, I maintain, have had to listen to one who knew even less. But a newcomer's position has its advantages. Such knowledge as I have of Liverpool ends, as I readily admit, round about 1815. Facing a Liverpool audience in the year 1808, say, I should have known, more or less, what topics to avoid. But now I am happily unaware of the toes on which I may trample and the feelings I may outrage…..



The full article can be read on our website by searching for Northcote, or by opening this link

https://liverpoolnauticalresearchsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Transactions-New-Vol-03-1946-47.pdf

Correspondence

Received via web site:

7 January, 2020
The Editor,
The Bulletin,

Dear Sir,

In his very interesting article "Defending the Mersey", Tony Barratt has omitted some sites in Wallasey. He mentions A.A. guns being sited on the bowling greens near to Fort Perch Rock. There were, however, three coast defence guns west of this site. They were where the traffic Island with the statue of the clown is now and were still in place for several years after the war ended.

There was also a rocket A.A. battery on the Warren Golf course. This was 104 (103 Cheshire Home Guard) Rocket A.A. Battery. My Father was a Captain in this unit. My older Brother told me that this was an experimental battery and the trajectories of the rockets were tracked and, at low water, the remains were recovered from the Burbo bank. He reckoned that this was a trial for the rocket artillery used at D Day.

In addition there was a battery on the sea wall between Wallasey and Leasowe golf links. I don't know whether this was A.A. or Coast Defence. The huts were still there in the 1950s. The site is still known as the Gunsite.

In the article about the "San Demetrio", (Bulletin September 2019) Gordon Bodey queries the reason for the "Admiral Scheer" breaking off the attack. In the book "Pocket Battleship" by Kranke and Brennecke (published in Britain in 1956) the reason is given that the "Scheer" had orders to proceed to the S. Atlantic and, also, it was after sunset and the Germans did not know British Naval deployments.

John Hill, in his history of the Bristol City Line, states that, that night, as the "Gloucester City" approached the scene of the attack, a large vessel travelling at high speed missed colliding with her by a margin of less than 100 feet. This can only have been the "Admiral Scheer".

Geoff Holmes, Member.

Board of Trade requirements in 1883 for officers in sail.

Two slightly differing sets of qualifications existed for officers qualified in sail or in steam. Certificates in sail also allowed the individual to sail in steam in the capacity of his certificate but steam did not qualify for sail. There was also a division between square-rigged ships and fore & aft ships. The following illustrates the Board of Trade requirements in 1883 for officers in sail.

Qualifications for Certificates of Competency for a "Foreign-Going Ship."

A Second Mate must be seventeen years of age, and must have been four years at sea.

In Navigation:- he must write a legible hand, and understand the first five rules of arithmetic, and the use of logarithms. He must be able to work a day's work complete, including the bearings and distance of the port he is bound to, by Mercator's method; to correct the sun's declination for longitude, and find his latitude by meridian altitude of the sun; and to work such other easy problems of a like nature as may be put to him. He must understand the use of the sextant, and be able to observe with it, and read off the arc.

In Seamanship:- he must give satisfactory answers as to the rigging and unrigging of ships, stowing of holds etc; must understand the measurement of the log-line, glass and lead-line; be conversant with the rule of the road, as regards both steamers and sailing vessels, and the lights and fog signals carried by them, and will also be examined as to his acquaintance with "the Commercial Code of Signals for the use of all nations."

An Only Mate must be nineteen years of age, and have been five years at sea.

In Navigation:- In addition to the qualification required for a Second Mate, an Only Mate must be able to observe and calculate the amplitude of the sun, and deduce the variation of the compass therefrom, and be able to find the longitude by chronometer by the usual methods. He must know how to lay off the place of the ship on the chart, both by bearings of known objects, and by latitude and longitude. He must be able to determine the error of a sextant, and to adjust it; also to find the time of high water from the known time at full and change.

In Seamanship:- In addition to what is required for a Second Mate, he must know how to moor and unmoor, and to keep a clear anchor; to carry out an anchor; to stow a hold; and to make the requisite entries in the ship's log. He will also be questioned as to his knowledge of the use and management of the mortar and rocket lines in the case of the stranding of a vessel, as explained in the official log-book.

A First Mate:- must be nineteen years of age, and have served five years at sea, of which one year must have been as either Second or Only Mate, or as both.

In Navigation:- In addition to the qualification required for an Only Mate, he must be able to observe azimuths and compute the variation; to compare chronometers and keep their rates; and find the longitude by them from an observation of the sun; to work the latitude by single altitude of the sun off the meridian; and be able to use and adjust the sextant by the sun.

In Seamanship:- In addition to the qualification required for an Only Mate, a more extensive knowledge of seamanship will be required as to shifting large spars and sails, managing a ship in stormy weather, taking in and making sail, shifting yards and masts, etc, and getting heavy weights, anchors etc, in and out; casting a ship on a lee shore; and securing the masts in the event of accident to the bowsprit.

A Master:- must be twenty-one years of age, and have been six years at sea, of which at least one year must have been as First or Only Mate, and one year as Second Mate.

In addition to the qualification for a First Mate, he must be able to find the latitude by a star etc. he will be asked questions as to the nature of the attraction of the ship's iron upon the compass, and as to the method of determining it. He will be examined in so much of the laws of the tides as is necessary to enable him to shape a course, and to compare his soundings with the depths marked on the charts. He will be examined as to his competency to construct jury rudders and rafts; and as to his resources for the preservation of the ship's crew in the event of a wreck. He must possess a sufficient knowledge of what he is required to do by law, as to entry and discharge, and the management of his crew, and as to penalties and entries to be made in the official log; and a knowledge of the measures for preventing and checking the outbreak of scurvy on board ship. He will be questioned as to his knowledge of invoices, charter-party, Lloyd's agent, and as to the nature of bottomry, and he must be acquainted with the leading lights of the channel he has been accustomed to navigate, or which he is going to use.

In cases where an applicant for a certificate as Master Ordinary has only served in a fore and aft rigged vessel, and is ignorant of the management of a square-rigged vessel, he may obtain a certificate on which the words *"fore and aft rigged vessel"* will be written. This certificate does not entitle him to command a square-rigged vessel. This is not, however, to apply to Mates, who, being younger men, are expected for the future to learn their business completely.

An Extra Master's Examination is voluntary and intended for such persons as wish to prove their superior qualifications, and are desirous of having certificates for the highest grade granted by the Board of Trade.

In Navigation:- As the vessels which such masters will command frequently make long voyages , to the East Indies, the Pacific etc, the candidates will be required to work a lunar observation by both sun and star, to determine the latitude by the moon, by Polar star off the meridian, and also by double altitude of the sun, and to verify the result by Sumner's method. He must be able to calculate the altitudes of the sun or stars when they cannot be observed for the purpose of lunars, - to find the error of a watch by the method of equal altitudes, - and to correct the altitudes observed with an artificial horizon.

He must understand how to observe and apply the deviation of the compass; and to deduce the set and rate of the current from the D.R. and observation. He will be required to explain the nature of great circle sailing, and know how to apply practically that knowledge, but he will not be required to go into the calculations. He must be acquainted with the law of storms, so far as to know how he may probably best escape those tempests common to the East and West Indies, and known as hurricanes.

In Seamanship:- The extra examination will consist of an inquiry into the competency of the applicant to heave a ship down, in case of accident befalling her abroad; to get lower masts in and out; and to perform such other operations of a like nature as the Examiner may consider it proper to examine him upon.

The examiners are to insert in the Report of Examinations (under the heading of remarks) the words "passed (or failed) in Commercial Code of Signals," as the case may be.

Syllabus of Masters' and Mates' Examination in Compass Deviation.

Any Master or Mate who wishes to pass a *Voluntary* Examination in the Syllabus of Examination on the Laws of deviation of the Compasses of an Iron Ship, etc, which candidates for Extra Masters' Certificates are required to pass, can at any time be examined upon payment to the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office of the usual fee of One Pound. If the candidate passes the examination successfully an endorsement to that effect will be duly made upon the Master's or Mate's Certificate held by him. If he fail to pass the fee will *not* be returned.

N.B. The Board of Trade trust that holders of Certificates of Competency will gladly take all steps in their power to earn the special distinctions conferred by these examinations.

Masters' and Mates' Voluntary Examinations in Steam.

Arrangements have been made for giving to those masters and First or Only Mates who are possessed of or entitled to Certificates of Competency, an opportunity of undergoing a voluntary examination as to their practical knowledge of the use and working of the steam engine. These examinations are conducted on the premises and under the superintendence of the Local Marine Boards, at such times as they may appoint for the purpose; and the examiners are selected by the Board of trade from the Engineers Surveyors appointed under the fourth part of "The Merchant Shipping Act 1854."

Notice of Alterations in the Examinations of masters and Mates.

From the 1st of August, 1881, Candidates for Second, Only, First Mates', and Masters' Certificates of Competency will, in addition to the present requirements for these grades, be required to pass an examination in the subjects specified below.

In Navigation.

A *Second Mate* will be required to find the time of high water at a given port; to observe and calculate the amplitude of the sun, and to find the error of the ship's compass therefrom, and also the deviation, the variation being given. He must also be able to find the daily rate of the chronometer from error observed, and to find the longitude by altitude of the sun by the usual methods.

An *Only Mate* will be required to find the true bearing of the sun, and the error of the ship's compass from an observed azimuth of the sun, both from an altitude and also from the "Time Azimuth Tables" and with the variation given compute the deviation; to find the latitude from a single altitude of the sun off the meridian, and also to ascertain the true bearing of the sun and the ship's position by Sumner's method of projection. He must also be conversant with the use of Mercator's chart, and be able to find, on either a *true* or *magnetic* chart, the course to steer, and the distance from one given position to another; to find the ship's position on the chart from cross bearings of two objects; from two bearings of the same object, the course and distance between the bearings being given; and also to find the distance of the ship from the object at the time of taking the second bearing.

A *First Mate* will also be required to find the true bearing of the sun from the "Time Azimuth Tables," and with the variation given compute the deviation, and also work out the same problems, on either a *true* or *magnetic* chart, as are required of a candidate for an Only Mate's certificate. (See above).

A *Master* will also be required to find the true bearing of the sun from the "Time Azimuth Tables," and with the variation given compute the deviation, and work out the same problems , on either a *true* or *magnetic* chart, as are required from the Only or First Mate. He will also be required to find the course to steer by compass in

order to counteract the effect of a given current, and to find the distance the ship will make good towards a given point in a certain time, and to *work out practically* the correction to apply to soundings taken at a given time and place, to compare with the depth marked on the chart.

In Seamanship.

Besides the subjects already prescribed in the rules for the ordinary examinations, Candidates for Second, Only, First Mates', and Masters' Certificates of Competency, will be required to give satisfactory answers as to their knowledge of the additional subjects (applying more particularly to steamships) which are specified in the Rules of Examination for Certificates of Competency for Foreign-Going Steamships.

T.H. FARRER, Secretary
THOMAS GRAY, Assistant Secretary.

Loss of the 'Kelly Coal Boat' ss **Camlough**

by LNRS Member W A Ogle

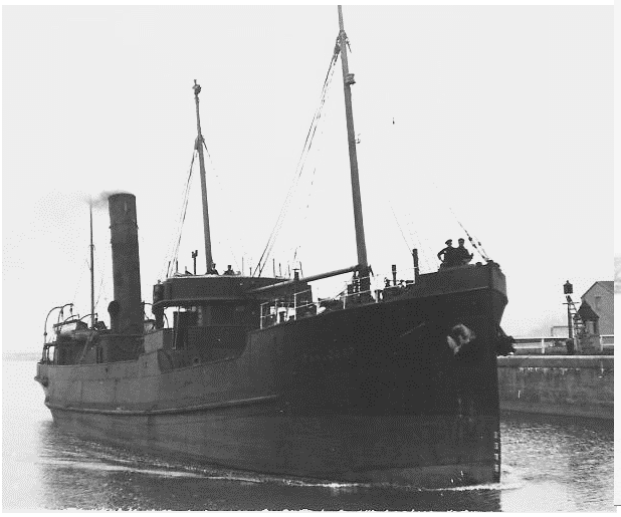
Greatly in need of sleep, and evidently suffering a great deal of shock, members of the crew of the steamship **Camlough** safely arrived in Belfast on 16 January 1932, having travelled on the Stranraer steamer to Larne

A few days earlier the **Camlough** had been en-route from her home port of Belfast to Birkenhead, travelling in ballast to collect a load of coal. After losing power she was taken under tow, which eventually failed and on 14 January 1932 she was wrecked in Luce Bay, Newton Stewart.

According to press reports chief engineer, Mr. Harry Thompson of London Street, Belfast explained the events they had experienced on this eventful passage.

Since sailing from Belfast at about 0700 on Tuesday 12th January, 1932 the water of Belfast Lough was like the Ormeau Park pond but as a crew member commented "later some of us swallowed almost enough water to fill the pond!" However by mid-day the wind freshened and at about 1945 hours, when just south of the Calf of Man it had built to a gale, when disaster struck. The engine room filled with steam and the main engine stopped.

The reason for this alarming event is not recorded but the chief and second engineers together with the two firemen laboured in atrocious conditions to “make the disconnections.” [It is presumed that this referred to arranging for steam to bypass one or more of the cylinders].



*ss **Camlough**. She was a typical engines aft, central exposed bridge, two hatch vessel*

*ss **Moyalla** looks to be considerably larger, still with the exposed bridge. She has more accommodation, possibly for passengers*

Having effected a partial repair the engine was restarted and the ship was turned to head back to Belfast. “Every dog makes for home when there’s trouble about” said Mr Thompson. Travelling at a speed of 4 knots they only made good about 15 miles, and were struggling against the increasing gale. By now they were shipping heavy seas fore and aft, anxiety was beginning to set in and there was no time to even prepare food. The engine room was so full of steam that they were unable to see, but luckily no water was getting into the vessel.

Further dangers arose early on Wednesday morning as they fought like demons to keep the ship clear of rocks of the Mull of Galloway, which were only a mile away. To maintain a safe level of water in the boiler they had to stop the engine for about half an hour, luckily it was safely restarted and they continued at the same slow speed, constantly being struck by tremendous seas on the port side. Then,
at about 0700 on Wednesday the engine appeared to be losing power, eventually coming to a complete standstill. In spite of strenuous effort, it could not be restarted.

At this critical point the battered crew noticed, much to their relief, the Limerick Steamship Co.’s steamer **Moyalla** approaching from a northerly direction. She had spotted the distress signal being flown by **Camlough** and drew alongside, possibly creating the most hazardous of all situations, to render all possible assistance by getting a line on to the distressed ship. This was only achieved after one and a half hours of hard, dangerous work and skillful maneuvering.

The crew on board the **Camlough** fastened a line to a buoy which was then floated towards the **Moyalla** and picked up, enabling a larger towing hawser to be winched across. On seven occasions the hawser broke whilst the **Moyalla** struggled to complete the tow into the more sheltered Luce Bay. Each time the anxious crews thought their hopes of safety had gone as the rocks of the Mull of Galloway became dangerously closer. At about 1930 on Wednesday evening **Camlough** fired distress rockets and burned flares because they could see no way of boarding the **Moyalla**. But once again the hawser was re-connected and **Camlough** pulled clear of the rocks.

By this time all eight of **Camlough**'s crew were on deck and some two hours later the Portpatrick lifeboat arrived and stood by as **Moyalla** tried to continue the tow towards the east side of Luce Bay. One and a half hours later the Donaghadee lifeboat arrived to help, but it was decided she was no longer required and was stood down. By now it was becoming a hopeless job as gradually the ships stopped further progress to windward, and increasing leeway took them closer to the rocks. **Camlough** dropped both anchors as **Moyalla** struggled to resume the tow, and also keep herself off the rocks. Inevitably the tow was cast off and **Camlough** was ashore.

Chief engineer Harry Thompson described the remarkable bravery of the Portpatrick men who cruised around the ships for more than two hours until, when his vessel went ashore, they were on the spot to immediately fire a lifeline over the ship and then draw alongside so that all five crew members were able to jump into the lifeboat. One seaman fell into the sea but was immediately rescued by the coxswain, the man still wearing his hat as he was pulled from the water.

The rescued crew paid glowing tributes to Captain Harvey who was last to leave the ship, having been on the exposed bridge almost continuously for 36 hours; during the four hours of the return to Portpatrick he whiled away some of the time by leading a sing-song. The lifeboat had been at sea for over twelve hours and travelled some 70 miles. The survivors were welcomed by the people of Portpatrick, especially at the Devonshire Arms Hotel, where they were given hot food and a change of clothes.

The survivors, other than Captain Harvey, were immediately returned to Belfast. He remained in Scotland and, together with Captain Clint of the owners, sought arrangements for salvage of the ship.

The wreck was eventually dismantled in-situ, but not without further drama as two of the ships engaged to remove the scrap were themselves lost. The E**thel** built 1899, described as a steam lighter of 97 gross tons and was evidently in use as a salvage vessel at the date of her loss on 19 September, 1933 and the **Omo,** classified as steam barge with cargo of scrap metal, was lost almost exactly a year later on 6 September 1934. She was built in Liverpool and was of 56 gross tons.

Details of the vessels

Name	Camlough		Moyalla
Owner	J. Kelly Ltd., Belfast		Limerick Steamship Co. Ltd., Limerick
Builder	Wm. Simons & Co., Renfrew		Caledon Co. Ltd., Dundee
Year	1920		1927
GRT/ NRT/ DW	540/ 205/ 620		642/ 245/ ?
Length/beam/draft	169/ 27/ 10 ft.		190/ 31/ 11 ft.
Engine -triple exp.	14", 24" and 40" by 30" stroke		17", 27" and 44" by 30" stroke
Power i.h.p.	90		147
Disposal	14/01/1932 wrecked Luce Bay, Newton Stewart		17/02/1946 wrecked Galway Bay, on passage Liverpool for Galway.

Thomas H Shuttleworth – Maritime Artist.

by L.N.R.S. Member Glyn L Evans

Some while ago I wrote an article for the Honourable Company of Master Mariners Journal on the life and work of the marine artist Jack Spurling; two of his original paintings, featuring the sailing ships **Harbinger** and **Torrens***,* being on display in HQS **Wellington***.* Recently, looking as one does through some back copies of the magazine Sea Breezes, the one for November 1997 to be exact, my attention was caught by the painting of a sailing ship that I thought must have come from the brush of Jack Spurling. However, the caption read "The tall ship **Mermerus** from a painting by T H Shuttleworth." It accompanied an article about the ship, written by the artist and, as I had not previously heard of T H Shuttleworth, another of my marine art research projects was born. The opening paragraph of the article reads, "Among the well-known builders of iron ships in the 1870s, Messrs Barclay-Curle & Co must rank among the best. They were the designers of some of the most beautiful ships that sailed the oceans of the world. Among these was the fleet of iron clippers of A & J Carmichaels' Golden Fleece Line which bore such names as **Golden Fleece, Jason, Mermerus, Thassalus** and **Argonaut.**" Readers will no doubt smile here and mutter

"Shades of Alfred Holt's Blue Funnel vessel-naming policy."

Firstly, I discovered that T H Shuttleworth had been a member of the Guild of Railway Artists, and the current CEO of the Guild, Frank Hodges, kindly provided the following biographical details. "Thomas Henry Shuttleworth, b.1920 – d.2007. Associate Member of the Guild from 1983. Although a life-long painter, Tom did not take painting up professionally until 1975 at which time, due to the demise of world shipping [Tom worked for a shipping company] he was given early retirement. Tom exhibited his works often – usually at Liverpool galleries, two at the Medici Society's Bold Street Gallery in 1975 and 1978. He was regarded as both a fine railway and marine artist with an extensive knowledge about the respective subjects. His depictions of old Liverpool would combine all aspects of his work - railway, marine and cityscape. Tom Shuttleworth's works have been reproduced as fine art prints and as greetings cards, many marketed by the Medici Society."

I thought the Medici Society's Gallery, Liverpool would be a good place to begin expanding on this information but my letter to them [or rather to Rennie's Gallery – the re-incarnation of Medici in Liverpool] went unanswered. Next port of call was Sea Breezes magazine, but my enquiry of them elicited only the fact that, due to recent change of management &/or ownership, information on articles and their authors prior to that change was not available. This was most galling as, in the May 1999 edition of that magazine, I had found another article by Thomas H Shuttleworth, entitled "A Brassbounder's Voyage in the Twilight of Sail" which included two fine paintings by him of the subject sailing ship, **Wray Castle**.

She was steel built by Williamson of Workington and launched 1892, ship rigged with crossed royals over single topgallants and double topsails on all three masts. She was 3,200 dwt and traded round the world for Robert Thomas & Co [Four Winds Shipping Co.] originally with an office in Criccieth, North Wales, later of Castle Street, Liverpool. Under the heading "Shipping Snippets," in the Liverpool Mercury newspaper for 26th January 1907, we read, "Com. W F Caborne, Inspector of the Board of Trade, inquired into the cause of the fire on board **Wray Castle** of Liverpool on 28th August 1906 at Lat. 22.4N and Long. 23.39W, states, "There is no evidence to show what was the cause of the fire."

To add to my now growing collection of Shuttleworth paintings, I found in the September 1999 edition of Sea Breezes, a colour centre spread of four ships, namely **Reina del Pacifico, Olivebank,** HMS **Agamemnon** and MV **Antenor.** These came with no narrative text other than each picture's caption and the tantalising heading "The skill of a fine artist giving pleasure to all – More from the Brush of Thomas H Shuttleworth." I have taken the liberty of adding the text below.

Reina del Pacifico – was built by Harland & Wolff, Belfast in 1931 for the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's passenger liner service from Liverpool to the Caribbean

***Wray Castle** outward bound from the Mersey, off South Stack and leaving the Liverpool No 1 Pilot cutter **Francis Henderson** astern.*

*mv **Reina del Pacifico***

*mv **Olivebank***

*HMS **Agamemnon***

*mv **Antenor***

*HMS **Dolphin***

and South American ports via the Panama Canal. Of 17,702 grt and with a service speed of 18 knots, she carried 800 passengers in three classes. She served as a troopship during WWII, taking part in the Allied landings in North Africa, Sicily and Normandy. In 1947 she returned to her normal service although her later career was marred by an engine-room explosion in which 28 personnel lost their lives, a grounding on Devil's Flat off Bermuda and the loss of one of her four propellers on a subsequent voyage. She was sold in 1958 and scrapped the same year at Newport, Mon.

Olivebank – was built for Andrew Weir & Co. by Harland & Wolff, Belfast in 1962. Andrew Weir had entered the ship-owning business in Glasgow in 1885 and eventually controlled one of the largest fleets of sailing ships under the Red Ensign. In 1905 the Company was registered in London as Bank Line but the ships continued to bear on their stern, "Glasgow" as their Port of Registry. The picture shows the third vessel to carry the name **Olivebank** for Andrew Weir & Co., the first being a steel-hulled sailing ship built in 1892 and surviving until hitting a floating mine off Jutland in 1939 with the loss of her Captain and fourteen of her twenty-one man crew. **Olivebank** [III] seen in the River Mersey about to pick up the tug **James Lamey** with a Birkenhead ferryboat visible astern, was sold to Panamanian owners in 1978.

Agamemnon – King of Argos and most powerful Prince of Greece, was elder brother of Menelaus, King of Sparta, married to the lovely Helen. It was Agamemnon who was chosen as commander-in chief of the great fleet assembled by Menelaus to sail against the Trojans. HMS **Agamemnon** [64 guns], pictured here, the first Royal Navy ship of that name, was built at Buckler's Hard on the Beaulieu River in 1781. Her battle honours included the two Battles of Copenhagen, 1801 and 1807 either side of the Battle of Trafalgar, 1805. Her crew, who did not like the classical names that were in vogue with the Admiralty at that time, renamed her "Eggs-and-bacon," a tradition maintained by the dock workers of Merseyside in later years. Although she was wrecked in Maldonado Bay in 1809, her name lives on. After four more RN ships of that name we now have the nuclear submarine HMS **Agamemnon** of the Astute-class currently under construction.

Antenor – When Alfred and Philip Holt conceived the founding of The Ocean Steam Ship Company they saw this as the greatest adventure of their lives and, because Homer's "Odyssey" was for them the finest adventure ever written, they gave Homeric names to their ships. Antenor was a Trojan prince related to King Priam and, when Odysseus and Menelaus came to Troy as ambassadors, they were received into his house. He recommended to the Trojans that they return Helen to her husband, Menelaus, and thus end the war. This advice was ignored, the war dragged on and later it was Antenor who, in an act of treachery, suggested to the Greeks they should build the Trojan horse. MV **Antenor** was built on Tyneside by Vickers-Armstrong in 1957 for Alfred Holt & Co., Liverpool for their UK – Far East cargo liner service. Of 7,965 grt and with a length of 452 feet, she had a service speed of 15 knots and accommodation for 12 passengers. Sold to Far Eastern buyers in 1973, she was broken up in 1983.

Continuing my research into the life and works of the artist, the enquiry I put to the Merseyside Maritime Museum in 2014 has yet to bear fruit, but I have to say that my experience of making enquiries of UK museums in general is somewhat akin to that of throwing a sausage down the Mersey Tunnel. This is a Merseyside expression,

politely interpreted as “a futile gesture.” Other feelers were put out but came to nothing. My friend Alan Hardy thought T H Shuttleworth had attended the same church as his old auntie in Liverpool, but sadly she died before this could be followed up. HCMM member, Lt. Richard Shuttleworth RN, confirmed that the artist was not part of the Derbyshire Shuttleworth clan. My fellow-member of the Liverpool Nautical Research Society, Ian Duckett, who has in the past kindly made local enquiries on my behalf, also drew a blank. The trail was growing cold and I was running out of leads to follow when, once again, reading an article in a 1998 copy of Sea Breezes, I came across another T H Shuttleworth painting, “HMS **Dolphin** at the Siege of Suakin”

The article, under the same heading, had been written by a Professor Gordon S Milne [now OBE] Scotland, co-incidentally a fellow member of the HCMM. Via a roundabout route, I was able to make contact with Gordon who emailed to say “I am very happy to assist you…I met the artist on a couple of occasions.” Sadly, it seems T H Shuttleworth was of a fairly reserved personality, but Gordon recollects the circumstances surrounding their meeting as follows:- “This stems from my going to Leith Nautical College in 1952/3 and spending some of the cadet course seamanship training on TS **Dolphin** based at West Old Dock, Leith. In 1998 I decided to record HMS **Dolphin** for posterity and asked T H Shuttleworth if he would accept the commission. He was quite demanding in his requirements of my brief, one example of which was a cutting I had from the 1885 London Illustrated News showing **Dolphin** at the Siege of Suakin.” The resulting picture that accompanied Gordon’s fascinating article on this historic event is shown here. I will say no more about the article as it may be that, at some stage in the future, Gordon might wish to share this with readers. Suffice to mention that **Dolphin** was launched in December 1882 and gave good service to the Royal Navy until her sale to private owners in 1924. From then she was used as a boys’ club until 1944 when she was taken over by Leith Nautical College, finally being scrapped in 1974.

Understanding Engineers:

What is the difference between mechanical engineers and civil engineers?

Mechanical engineers build weapons. Civil engineers build targets.

It’s an Ill Wind

By the late LNRS Vice President H.M Hignett

The wind was so strong that bitter January night in 1953, that Marie Martin stayed the night after visiting friends at Borve on the west coast of the Isle of Lewis, some 20 miles north of Stornoway, not daring to chance crossing the exposed Borve River Bridge. On the way home early the following morning, Marie, used only to seeing fishing smacks, saw what was to her eyes a huge ship high and dry on the rocky beach some 500 yards away.

The ‘huge ship’ was the **Clan Macquarrie**, a war-time standard vessel built as the **Ocean Wayfarer** in 1942 at the Todd-Bath Iron Ship Building Corporation's yard, Portland, Maine. The ‘Ocean’ class vessels were all 441ft oa, with a beam of 57 ft. The triple expansion engines developed a mere 505 n.h.p In April 1951 the ship, owned by the Ministry of Transport and managed by Thompson Steam Shipping Co Ltd, was acquired by Clan Line Steamers Ltd. The new owners promptly converted the boilers from coal-burning to oil, adjusting the tonnage to 7,131 gross, 4,259 net. The navigation aids were simple and basic; magnetic compass, echo—sounder and radio-direction finder. There was no radar.

As usual with Clan Line vessels, the master and officers were British and the crew Indian. Captain Dennis de Vall was an experienced Clan Line shipmaster and the chief officer, George Emmett, had served in the company since joining as a cadet.

After discharging most of her homeward (ex-India) Cargo on the Continent, she completed at Dundee. During the stay at that port, Captain de Vall inspected the crew accomodation for the last time before dry-docking. The Serang’s room had traces of

bugs and he was ordered to exterminate them; his open reluctance (for religious reasons) crushed by the threat of instant dismissal.

The **Clan Macquarrie** left Dundee in somewhat of a hurry, bound for the Clyde where a dry-dock had been booked. There was a shortage of dry-docks those days and late arrivals lost their place in the queue. She cleared during the afternoon of 29 January 1953 with a draft of 7ft 9in for'd and 11ft 6in aft; light ship with all tanks full including 750 tons of fuel-oil - the maximum. In this trim almost half of the propeller was out of the water wasting much of the energy in spray.

After steaming in light westerlies through the Pentland Firth she met gradually increasing winds. About noon on Thursday, 30 January, when almost abeam of Cape Wrath with the wind SW 6/7 she headed SW into a rough sea and moderate swell which reduced the speed to about $8^{1}/_{2}$ knots. The 13.00 weather forecast warned of an intense depression approaching the Hebrides and predicted severe gale force winds in the area.

During the afternoon the ship pounded so heavily that the steering compass was jolted three times from the gimballs, each time falling on to the electric bulb underneath and smashing it. The last time after the engine speed was reduced to ease the pounding.

Just before 18.00, when in the shelter of the Minch, the pounding eased and full speed was resumed. Tiumpan Head light was abeam to starboard 4.5 miles 20 minutes later. There was still a moderate gale with heavy rain squalls: a gale warning broadcast at 18.30. forecast a severe SW gale veering quickly to NNW (this was never received on the ship). The barometer was low and falling rapidly.

Captain de Vall was uneasy; worried about his approach to narrower waters. Ahead he knew a light-float had been replaced by a light-buoy, but would it have as bright a light? With frequent rain squalls reducing visibility there would be problems in making a safe course through the narrows. And with the bottom shelving steeply there was insufficient warning of the proximity of land.

He decided to turn back and make for open sea. Tiumpan Head light was passed again to port 5.5 miles at 19.49. Rounding the Butt of Lewis about 22.00 the **Clan Macquarrie** was forced to alter course to the south earlier than intended and within two miles of the lighthouse, by two fleets of trawlers scurrying for shelter from the approaching storm. Course was set to pass west of the Flannan Islands about 249°T. The wind was about two points on the port bow 8/9: revs were reduced to ease the pounding in the heavy swell and the vessel was steering well. In view of the light condition 10 degrees leeway to port was allowed.

The wind veered sharply to the west at 22.52 and increased to Storm 10. Leeway was altered to 10 degrees to starboard and within ten minutes a full hurricane was

blowing; 20 degrees leeway to starboard was allowed. About this time Stornoway Airport, some 40 miles downwind, was recording gusts up to 105 knots.

Any leeway allowance was now completely inadequate. Captain de Vall had to get the ship's head into the wind. With the helm hard a starboard and engines full ahead - double ring - she would come round a mere two points: even alternate engine movements full ahead and astern were to no avail.

And the rolling was increasing; on deck the roar of the wind and the hiss of the sea pervaded everything, dominating all other noises.

Chief officer Emmett was called at 23.15. In the wheelhouse Captain de Vall ordered him for'd with the carpenter to clear the anchors for letting go. The anchors were to be run out of the hawse-pipes a little. Communications between bridge and foc'stle head were non-existent, shouting was out of the question. A series of signals with hand torches was arranged:

Captain to C/O: vertical movement = let go.
C/O to Captain: one flash = come ahead.
C/0 to Captain: three flashes = take off way.

Emmett and the carpenter met on the main deck both wearing their tough, sticky oilskins. They set of together; as soon as they stepped from the lee of the bridge, the wind almost knocked them flat. Each crept across the deck to No 2 and then struggled along the fore-deck under the lee of the hatch coamings until the for'd breakwater was reached. There was no raised fo'c'stle—no shelter there.

Anchors were clear by 23.35; 23.42, stand-by engines 23.48, slow ahead; 23.49, let go starboard anchor; 23.50, on signal from C/O, anchor leading abreast to starboard, engines half ahead. Although the starboard anchor took the weight, there was some delay in dropping the port anchor; 23.59, let go port anchor, engines full ahead and helm hard a starboard. The ship's head barely moved.

The coast of Lewis could be seen clearly even through the mist and spray. For a few minutes it seemed as if the ship would come round, but at 00.07 speed was reduced to half to ease the strain on the cables.

A minute later the ship appeared to lift a little, then struck the ground with a violent shock, rattling and shaking the masts, rigging and even the hatch boards. A few more heavy shocks and then oil began flooding from the double bottom air-pipes, covering the decks with a slimy ooze. The vessel pounded heavily on the rocks and the wind and sea pushed her over a reef into calmer waters. But the seas grew steadily higher, washing over the ship. The second officer was sent for'd to call the chief officer and carpenter aft to the bridge. ‘

Distress signals were sent over the w/t radio at 00.14 and acknowledged. And with waves breaking over the **Clan Macquarrie** and a rising tide the pounding became stronger. As the cellular double-bottom was carried only partly along the ship, the rocks pierced the hull in way of No 5 hold, which was flooded, setting the stern firmly on the ground. The tunnel was flooded and water began entering the engine room - the watertight door between the engine room and the tunnel was found not to be watertight. With the vessel pivoting on her stern, the waves swung her bow to the shore and heavy seas began to break over the stern, filling the crew's accommodation. The crew were mustered in the saloon.

As the water was entering the engine room and rising, and the pumps barely able to cope, all unnecessary engine room staff were called on deck.

About 01.00 signals were observed from the shore but the Morse was unreadable. (It was later found that it had been a power-line ashore 'sparking').

Morse signals were again observed and answered. The message informed them that the rocket apparatus was on the way. An hour later the first rocket was fired, but missed. At 04.15 a second rocket was on target, but caught on the main aerial. There was now a breakdown of communications; those ashore being unable to read the ship's morse due to the driving rain and spray in their faces. They thought the second rocket had missed and when hauled in by the ship's crew there was nothing on the end of it.

The severity of the weather defeated all further attempts to establish communications and, as the ship was firmly aground and not likely to break up, the operation was called off.

At 05.00 the fires in the boiler-room were drawn and the steam 'blown off'. The vessel was still pounding and stanchions and other fittings in the engine room were seen to be buckling.

By 06.00 the ship seemed steadier and attempts were made to raise steam again, but with water still rising the attempt was abandoned.

As the water receded with the tide during the morning the damage to the ship was carefully assessed. She was going to be there for some time: obviously the crew should be taken off.

The rocket apparatus was re-rigged by 11.00. But there was a problem. The ship lay aground off the Borve River and the land around was soft clay and peat, giving unsuitable holding for the main breeches buoy hawser. Eventually with the hawser made fast for'd to the Suez Canal light davit and over 50 men ashore pulling it taut, the crew were taken off one by one, the first away at 12.15.

The serang, climbing into the breeches buoy, and determined to have a final word, turned to the chief officer and said '*You make me kill! Now! dekko, dekko (look)*'. He waved his arm airily towards the bridge.

When all were ashore and taken to local accommodation, they found themselves listening to the horrific stories about the **Princess Victoria**, a couple of hundred miles to the south.

The master was never to sail with the company again. With hindsight there were many factors leading to this stranding and it is difficult not to feel a little sympathy for Captain de Vall, but in the circumstances it was very fortunate that there was no loss of live.

Chief officer Emmett was appointed to stand by the vessel during the salvage attempts. For six weeks he lived in accommodation ashore. Almost every day he called at the local Post Office to inform the owners of progress with preparations for getting the ship off the rocks.

Captain George Emmett eventually retired as local Marine Superintendent (West Coast) of Clan Line. He returns each year to Borve to visit relatives of his wife, the former Marie Martin, daughter of the Postmaster in 1953.

The salving of the **Clan Macquarrie**.

The vessel, lying in an open position at right-angles to the general run of the coast just above low water springs, was a quarter of a mile from the outer reef and half a mile from the five fathom line. The Borve River, surrounded by soft peaty land flowed into the sea 100 yards distant on the port bow.

Rocks pierced the outer hull for'd and aft, yet supporting her at low water when the salvors were able to walk under the midship section, which although damaged on the outer reef had not sustained further damage. From half flood to half ebb the long Atlantic swell lifted and pounded her on the rocks with a sickening, grinding motion.

For the salvors there were four main tasks:

1. to make the hull as watertight as possible;
2. to reduce the draft sufficiently to clear the outer reefs;
3. to provide power for services aboard; and
4. to provide power for getting the ship away from the coast.

A survey showed the tank-tops in way of the engine room to be reasonably sound. The watertight door between the engine room and the shaft tunnel was made watertight again, allowing the boilers to be brought into use. The hull in way of No 5 hold was pierced at the bottom plating, the double bottom not being carried under the hold. The holes were plugged and sealed with cement boxes.

The best method of reducing the draft was to use compressed air to the tanks, thus blowing the water out. Compressors were needed. Apart from the settling tanks, there was no fuel oil aboard; it was therefore very fortunate that after conversion from coal to oil-burning, the fire-bars remained aboard stowed away in the boiler-

room, making it easy to convert the boilers back to coal-burning. But there were only 40 tons of galley coal available for powering the windlass and winches.

There was no safe way of putting even a small craft alongside. Therefore, five lorry-loads of equipment, extra pumps and a couple of compressors were brought by road and ferry from Glasgow to Stornoway. The equipment had to be manhandled or carried from the main road, half a mile away, over the soft fields to be hauled aboard by winch. At first a derrick was used to lift the heavier pieces aboard; later the salvage crew rigged a 'Blondin', a taut wire from the head of the jumbo-derrick in its upright 'home' position abaft the foremast, led to a temporary firm foundation ashore. A sling tray was then hauled along the wire. One of the winches was converted to compressed-air working, but this was found to be too slow.

Clan Macquarrie *hard aground at Borve*
Photographs courtesy of Mrs Kenina Graham, Borve

Every sounding and air pipe to each hold was cut and sealed. Holes were drilled in the tank-tops to take compressed-air fittings; 8-in-square holes were cut in the starboard side of each hold and on both sides of No 5. This was to allow the hold to flood speedily, thus holding the ship firmly on the rocks.

To steady the vessel and reduce movement in heavy swell, two heavy wires ($4^{1}/_{2}$ and 6 in) were rigged on the port side from bollards at the for'd end of No 1 and No 4 hatches to strops placed around two large outcrops of rock on the beam

About 1,200 ft from the starboard bow there was another large rock outcrop to which a wire cable was attached (using two 120-fathom coils of $6^{1}/_{2}$-in wire shackled together). This was to be used in moving the ship to starboard during the final salvage manoeuvre. It was taken aboard through the for'd starboard fairlead and led along the deck to a threefold purchase (20t blocks), the pennant of which was secured around the starboard bunker hatch just abaft the bridge. The purchase wire was taken to No 2 winch.

Two tugs, **Metinda III** and **Salveda**, were used in the salvage. There were, in fact, five attempts to move the ship to starboard as a preliminary to the final floating off (all unsuccessful), the last of which was on 17 February 1953 - 18 days after the stranding. The tugs could not approach nearer than 500 yards from the **Clan Macquarrie** and every time an attempt was abandoned, the towing wires had to be slackened, then buoyed before leaving the scene. In heavy weather the tugs had to steam to base, five hours away near Stornoway. During the several attempts to move the ship, communications with the tugs initially over m/f radios) was via hand morse lamps—not the easiest of methods, when one considers the in-depth use of vhf radio these days.

The successful floating occurred on 16 March (44 days after the stranding). High water was about 07.00, there was an offshore wind, force 3, with a fairly moderate swell. Each tug had a towing wire fast aft and towing commenced at 06.00, whilst those on board began heaving on the heavy purchase wire to move the bow to starboard. Over 1,200 ft of wire cable was clear of the water during this operation.

At 06.10 the ship was rolling slightly; 15 minutes later she was moving bodily to starboard and there was a fairly severe bumping on the ground. At 06.34 the port steadying wires were slipped and the ship began pitching easily, indicating she was afloat both ends.

All pumps were now working to full capacity. The windlass heaving on the port anchor cable, which was hove home by 07.03. Five minutes later the starboard wire was slipped.

At 07.30, with all wires gone and clear, the vessel was moving freely. With the tugs pulling steadily and the vessel rolling and pitching heavily she was not touching bottom: they were afloat. As she began to move easily astern, the water in No 5 hold was gaining on the pumps.

At 08.00 one of the tug's wires fouled the bottom and only one tug had the weight of the ship. But at 08.10 the tugs were able to adjust their towing wires and the **Clan Macquarrie** was once again at sea, towing easily to Broad Bay, a couple of miles north of Stornoway. At least one of the towing wires broke on the way and at noon No 5 hold was seen to be flooded to sea level. On anchoring that night at 21.00 the draft was read as 6 ft 9 in for'd and 20ft aft.

Several days later the vessel was dry-docked near Glasgow and after surveying the hull damage (and finding a 5-ton rock embedded in No 2 DB tank) she was taken to an anchorage in one of the Lochs north of the Clyde. Finally, six weeks later, the vessel was declared a constructive total loss.